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Old Tote crisis
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Theatre

April 1978
Volume 2 No 9

Departments

- 2 Comment
- 3 Questioned Quares
- 7 Whoppers, Samsons and Fats
- 46 TFI Roundup
- 50 Guide Theatre, Opera Dance

Features

- 8 Old Time Class — Douglas Fennell examines the situation behind the Times issue
- 10 Haines Carnegie — Ben Crompton in interview with Roger Puleston
- 16 National Theatre Award Nominations
- 12 Theatre Tramping — Richard Mink and his late pre-contrary views of N.I.D.A.

Spotlight

- 3 Spotlight on Stephen Barry: Robert Alexander and Robert Van Macklinburg

International

- 41 Where is the report? — Downside G Gundy in Rome

Playwright

- 28 A Happy and Holy Descent — Ann El John O'Donoghue

Opera

- 41 David Glynis Harvey Australian Opera Summer Season

Ballet

- 59 Australian Ballet, Seven Lake William Shostakovich

Theatre Reviews

- 17 N. A.
The Normal Heart
Ghetto & The Rape of Lucretia
The Wakefield Mystery Days
- 19 V.E.
Nocturne
Melbourne Society
Dance, Film, Site & Pi
Breaker, Theatre
- 22 Q.E.
Flight, Post
Small Change
- 23 S. A.
Adelaide Survey
Orpheus
- 25 N. S. W.
Mercury, Double, Everyman
Each Play
Neil Kelly
Sydney Survey

Film

- 41 Elizabeth Boddell/Terry Davis

Records

- 45 Roger Correll

Books

- 46 John McCullum

Australia

National
Theatre Opera Dance
Guide p50

Stephen Barry new director of the National Theatre Company, Perth talks to Margot Luke



Stephen Barry

Listening to a new director has its problems. So many of the questions are concerned with intentions rather than achievements. Will our Theatre be in good hands? Will you be able to carry out your bright visions?

Stephen Barry, new Artistic Director of the National Theatre Company at the Perth Playhouse is very much aware that the promise of a dazzling new future is an intangible thing. But already he has set about providing tickets of a new era with answers to practical matters. Good relations with the press. A pleasant look up reinforced by very professional press kits giving nothing but pure qualifications and future plans. A bright team aptly saying Playhouse flashes on and off, lending a touch of theatricality to an otherwise drab Perth scene. These projects of the first production have a light and glow about them. Contrary to theory theatre patronage in this hottest summer in Perth's history is maintained, the unexpected modulations behind the bar have disappeared but the friendly and efficient front of house staff remain and are duly appreciated. Audiences will be encouraged to become regular patrons on a subscription basis.

So the preopening is fast. How about the seasons? The first season shows cautious balancing for the Festival in February, the Appleblossom trilogy, *The American Quarterly*. A visit from the BBC with *Dance With Me* and *Williamson's The Club*. Last there'll be *Director* and *The Ghost Train*, and another

four-piece work, O'Donoghue's *A Hoppo*, and *And's* *Shiraz*. The Corporation tenderly belatedly wish to be hoping to attract a 50th birthday and sendings: Miss Julie, *Bohème's* *Running for Cash* and finally *Mouset's* *Last Man Standing*.

The already active Theatre in Education will be expanded and a series of 12 weekly Perth Readings and Lectures will be introduced.

Stephen Barry's own preferences lie in the direction of Shaw, Ibsen and Chekhov, and he has no burning desire to provide earth-shattering new interpretations of Shakespeare.

His approach to the job is organically professional, pragmatic and friendly. Despite the intensive use of a handsome public relations organisation there is an emphasis on personal contact: phone calls are returned promptly, meetings sponsored in elegant dining saloons and the back of the hand is always ready to shake. His own work is his mother's affair with the Old Vic, his first father, Sir Gerald Barry, was the wartime editor of *The New Chronicle* and Director General of the Festival of Britain in 1951.

Who did he come to believe in, a suffering, who many people would not see as an inspiration of an already distinguished career in English banking at the National and National Theatre also at Guildford, Cheltenham and more recently completing a few years later in America, Director of the Harrogate Theatre Company's Wandsworth and challenge, he says. After Harrogate (pop 65,000) Perth is now like a large provincial town in England. In Harrogate he achieved the goal he had set himself — few years being a kind of spiritual prison for publishing centers and getting things moving slowly — after that complexity was in the challenge of Perth of course is not merely the size. He feels that the theatre scene in Australia is in a state of flux, less entered by modern than the temporary movement in England. He sees his task as being sensitive to the maintenance of demand and satisfying major tastes but also developing what tastes in addition.

The first season as announced looks heavily toward the future. Clearly Barry is using the first year to feel his way and it seems both useful and intelligent to have the first two big Australian productions produced by the Melbourne Theatre Company which arrived there. The third Australian play *A Hoppo* and *And's* *Shiraz* will continue to have directed by Stephen Barry himself.

If one wants to affix a label to the new approach, one might call it more audience-oriented. The subscription-looking time at

audience loyalty, and at the same time, the pressure of engaging a man for such extended play shows more concern for steady demands than job security for actors. The decision to have no permanent resident company has already caused a serious amount of controversy. Perhaps, though, had they been content by separating round seats and square pews, and it is tempting to think that time the audience's point of view the change must be beneficial. The question is of course whether actors will stay in Perth without a firm contract, or such as in Sydney and Melbourne with their more varied conditions.

Stephen Barry does not believe that the actor will be disadvantaged. "We will design local rules to sign and our aim will be two-way exchange with other companies. I do not think Perth should think of itself as an employer of talent only, but an employer in kind. The point should be reached where a Perth production would enable us to do in the point where it will be several to appear in other towns."

Will he encourage local writers? Yes, there will be, undoubtedly. But more probably he has already engaged Richard Toff to write for the Theatre in Education wing of the company. Apart from this he has deliberately refused from promising the delivery of good new Australian plays. If a good new play is discovered in Perth it's obviously going to be Australian. After all, an English Company would not promise to produce only good new English plays.

In his first year in the theatre (the 32) what has been the highlight, if not the highlight is all. Director Sir Alec Guinness as an interesting enough variety play — Time out of Mind by Nigel Boland. Watching Sir Alec be taken about dancing and comic music at a mixture of whimsy, relaxing and learning.

The Appleblossom trilogy will be one first look at Barry as a man. Handy plays of actors — why did he choose it? Again the idea of challenge applies. To the actors, remembering which of the plays they are doing, that time in the next is such, with individual developments of character. There will be one marathon performance of all three plays in one day, but promises to that there are two week seasons of each play and finally there will go into alternating repertory. The challenge to the audience will be to remember who has gone before. In the regard, it is a combination of that's best in Appleblossom, long history and entertaining enough to attract audiences, but clever and punning enough to be taken seriously as a dramatic stage piece for a new director to show his marks.

Robert Alexander

Lucy Wagner

Now you see him. . .



Robert Alexander

Photo: Jane Green Management

A lot of audiences — especially Sydney audiences — have enjoyed performances by Robert Alexander. In fact, so much I wonder how many can put a face to the name. Not that the performances weren't enjoyable and memorable as themselves, but Robert finds himself in so many of the double lead of a certain kind of character actor, that of subsuming his own personality as performance as fully into that of his stage character that the creative artist behind it is forgotten. The great he himself must always evidence a smaller presence. Ralph Richardson is one of those old men though his sheer longevity, but how many of Leonard Rossini's roles spring to mind?

A need to become very much part of something has been a trade mark of Robert Alexander's work. From his first choice career of music teacher which took him round the world.

One of the people most keen for him to take the plunge into cinema was childhood and all time friend Richard Wherrett — "This is your great risk taker all his life — and they worked together early on in the *Q* Theatre as Sydney in a production of *Balance of Payments* with Mungo Dyer and Peter Hawley. Also in the *Q* were a couple of parts in *Too Old For Spring*, a comic musical written by the Renaissance group, a prison memoir called *Wally*, and the camp plays of *Not Kelly*."

Working at National from 1975 consolidated Robert's working type as a character actor, a straight part in Richard Wherrett's *Richard III* meant playing as mad in John Bell's *Much Ado About Kate's* evil, masculine twining, safe back Bonnet as a memorable role, and one that brought a great feeling of belonging to a company especially when that production played at The Space in Adelaide. Even Gordon McDougall, that well-known player, said he'd never experienced anything like it when the last night audience gathered applauding round the edge of the stage, while the cast, stood, moved to music by the organist.

Two roles of *Rescuee Blood* — this time a gothic, Dr. Levisy — were "an outrageous take experience" as was *Lower House* in a very different role — the legions of Law who get his throat cut.

1979 in Newcastle with the first year of the Hunter Valley Theatre Company proved an interesting and exciting experience in offering a great range of roles from an rehearsal in *The Floating World* a play which deeply shocked the outlying Hunter Valley regions, to Dame Gertrude in *Hamlet* or for an substantial performance performance in a moving and sympathetic Mr. Smeagol. Back in town as the youthful and charming protagonist in *Glass Menagerie* the hallowed, cracked academic in *Deathtrap* temple Irish Drury in the acclaimed local play *A Negro and Holy Cross* and finally singer actor and dancer in an end of year review *Four On the Floor*, the role of which summed up the state of the company at this time.

As the company reduced to three actors with Tony Sheldon and Kerry Walker and director Terry Clarke, and they faced the daily possibility of legions the group feeling lightened, sometimes willingly. Perhaps Robert Alexander is right when he says he thinks he's a late developer. He finds he's going over the feeling of needing to belong to an entity and able to take things much more as they come. But he doesn't plan to stop submerging himself in the characters. "That's when you know you've got them right."

Robert Van Macklenburg

Joan Ambrose

The critics nomination in Western Australia for the Best Actor

One of the outstanding qualities Robert Van Macklenburg has as an actor, is an extraordinary ability to project the part he is playing through movement.

He moves with the maximum and is a lot of a trained dancer — which he is not. So apparently it is an innate quality that allows him to create character with hands, eyes, mouth and feet, but above all with an extra dimension of body expression that is rare. His Napoleon scene was *A Minute of Silence* his interpretation of *Macbeth's Edward the Second* portrayed an emotionally and physically vulnerable working, especially in his childhood experience before his death. In *Blondie in Affair* in *Cherry Ripe* created the illusion of someone over a classical vocal, and by contrast his Joe Joseph Porter in *At the Heart of the Matter* was a physical embodiment

As an actor Robert Van Macklenburg has a range and depth of performance, but it wasn't too long ago that he was mainly cast as a villain. And in the beginning this seemed as if it would be a major stumbling block to his career.

"The problem was," he said, "that as the Mercury Theatre in New Zealand where I trained, it was a sort of anthropomorphic system whereby the theatre was given a grant to train four young actors a year, and in the end of two years the Company had the option of employing the students. The obviously there were always too many graduates for the Company to absorb. Essentially the only permanent work I could get was as a stage manager. Which I hated, but it brought me to Australia."

It was as a stage manager that he came to Perth for the first time, and eventually he became associated to the Playhouse and was offered a juvenile part in Peter Korn's *A Good God* beautifully produced by Terry Clarke. It was in that play that the process of the future could be seen as the performance that he gave.

There were more small parts and then the opportunity to play Alan Swain, the emotionally wrecked boy who bleeds the horses, in *Agnes*. This part proved to be rather more than Robert expected in having a close order. Agnes is something that he is prepared to talk about now, but it was obviously very traumatic.

Although Agnes had been performed all over the world, without any objection to the male scenes, and even had two seasons at Perth as called because it was when the play was on country tour that complaints were made to the police with the resulting charge of indecent exposure. Although the charges were eventually dismissed "As the time," he said, "it was a pretty horrendous experience, mixed with total disbelief that it could be happening at all." It was a difficult period and a real scare case for the effect it had upon him to hide.

But in about this time, the juvenile roles were replaced by others of parts that were varied and complex. For this, we can thank John Milton, director of *The Hole in the Wall* who quite early on realised that Robert was an actor who could be developed. Robert gives John Milton the credit for the work in which his talents have grown and his levels of interpretation have deepened.

"After thinking at one time, that I might never get into theatre, I feel I have really been very lucky. I know had marvellous people to work with. And in small companies there's a lot of support. At *The Hole* there's always a good feeling — and in working at such places as *Long Day's Journey into Night* and *Mr. Fox* friends at *The Road*, on such occasions there, there were only four of us, but it was a fantastically good and close working experience."

Robert Van Macklenburg has come a long way since he had "rough and a good" in *Finian's* just a few years ago. Now what?

"I want to read as much as much as I can, as much as possible, and to go on expanding and developing."

“QUOTES & QUERIES”



Cand Racus (Ficht), Yvonne Ganey (Vat), Pat Bishop (Giles) and Nancy Hayes (Diana) in the MTC production of *Blood: Ficht, Giles and Vt* photos by David Parker

REG NOT BLAMED ALONE

BOB ELLIS: "La has 1972 when preliminary copies of *Midwinter* a one-act play written by Reg Lindsay in one night writing moments. Not actor for the office of Reg, while he was Reg Lindsay past for the powers of a head as those would enable him to fly, crashingly attacked into multi-actored performances by Patrick Pigg of Kate and Michael Clarke at California, and recently sung by the Supremes and Lesley Mann in the rock scenes of Liverpool and Adelaide, proved insufficiently intellectual for the taste of Lyric Theatre as pointed out by Reg, my intensely gifted collaborator on *The Jones Dealer*, *Chatter* and *Sunday Too Far Away*, paid me a thousand dollars to rewrite so much of it as seemed reasonable. Without much pleasure I did so, from feeling sure songs through my disconcerted mind and my growing discomfort while Reg looked down and Clyde nodded complacently, and writing lines now come 'What This Is Now', 'The Blood of the Bees' and 'Queen Victoria's Feet'. The record was out and released, in which, correctly, I got a credit for Additional Lyrics and the designated stage director Sir Robert Helpmann and Reg went off to London together to discuss in depth a new concept of the show emphasizing Nida's penchant for dressing up in women's clothes. I heard nothing more for three years until the opening in Adelaide of an enormous electric musical, whereon my credit on it, led me to believe that Reg had returned to his normal occupations. Uninvited to the opening night in

Solbury I paid to see a one Wednesday, and was amazed to find most of my former music and remembered by what appeared to be forty or so one of an appalling evening. Besides Reg also should not be blamed for this corrupting caption on our national history, I generously read and wrote developments with success."

BLOCK BUSTER SCHEDULE

NICK ROOGER: "I don't think I've ever been so busy. Right at the moment I have three plays to read for the Playwrights' Conference and actors and directors go on while working on the biggest production I've ever undertaken. In fact I think Richard Dill is probably one of the biggest productions the MTC has ever presented. It is a constantly black box of a show with a cast of twenty-five like I am very excited about being artistic director of the Playwrights' Conference and about participating in the artistic direction of the MTC during John Sumner's absence. Trouble is there just isn't enough hours in the day. I have to stick to a very tight schedule. I'm trying to read an average of two plays a day from breakfast, lunch or whenever I have a break and working on Richard Dill right."



IMPROVED AUSRATINGS

RICHARD WHERRETT: "Mainly I was happy to see a new theatre in Australia while I was in London. Right now, you know it, though for an interesting play to go. When I left London, just now, it was considered as something like a side to tell. I must say that I was very much surprised by the part of the political situation and at a national level, but it is at its best with the Australian film and theatre situation — but nothing to do with the theatre shows in my opinion, they're not so good as the ratings."

As the first person of European descent in the audience generally — and I got the most of my life. I thought it must be a mistake! Then they showed a much more exciting picture, and on the opening night, and it became more and more successful. I think it's fair to say that 95% of the reviews were favourable, and they were universally saying about Gordon usually Gordon is of those delighted by the opportunity to do the play wherever he is asked. It keeps doing it so much. That's very strong pleasure

for the show to go to New York at some point, possibly the end of this year."

AWARDED REJECTED

Ray Lawler was awarded the Critics' Circle Drama Award for Victoria, but refused to accept it.

RAY LAWLER: "It would be hypocritical and inconsistent of me to keep the award. I don't want anyone to feel awkward. It's a personal decision and not to be taken as one made by the MTC. I'm not very much in favour of awards, I think that if you accept such awards, you're recognizing the right of one to be made a delicate award. If you accept that right when they're in your favour then you must accept it when they go against you. Dozens of times I have had things, not necessarily about my shows, that I don't agree with."

PLAYS FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT

PETER COLLINGWOOD excerpts from *The Car and the Country Program*: "The 1972 policy for the Private Theatre is quite clearly to present plays which we believe you, our audience, will enjoy. Most plays submitted to 'enjoy', to be 'locally relevant' or which 'try out to be best', but just those which will make you feel on leaving the theatre 'I am so glad we came. I really enjoyed that.' It has been said that we will be doing 'popular plays'. Though a convenient label, I feel that the term implies a choice based primarily on the play's proven popularity with audiences elsewhere, usually overseas. When in question of choice in the popularity of a play here in Solbury. The idea that a West End or New York success is necessarily a success in Solbury has, one hopes, been firmly exploded. In fact the theatre is somewhat true — a moderate success or even failure overseas can appeal greatly to audience here."

"Commercial plays" is an even less satisfactory term. It has a cynical ring, implying that it doesn't matter whether a play is good or bad provided it has got something which will pull in the public. Such a policy ignores a need for quality and surely quality should always be a prime consideration in the selection of plays for the company."



Brian Young

RIP IT OUT

BRIAN YOUNG: *After Prisoner of Second Avenue* I'm really pleased about doing the next play in the Ensemble called *Lenny*. It's a three-handed female play, you see them get out of school, grabbing from various acts and then finally about ten years later. Basically it's about the explosion of the myth that being popular is the most desirable thing. By now playwright Jack Haffner, a war correspondent at the end of his days and takes an unusual form, it has the on-screen talent on stage and the cast sat them up, you then make-up on stage and change the scenes. I'm trying to get as all female now also. I'm sure they will be able to help me a lot from their own experiences. The cast are Kathy Thomson, Beonyia Fulkerson and Debbie Jeaysen. We were going to do *Hager's Paradise* when I'm served.

You're good to be in Sydney after *Ensemble* which means nothing, it's a very quiet city. I think it's faster than London. But it's a bit weird of a city, doesn't give you anything, you have to get it out. Everyone's saying it's so good to have you in Sydney, but this is no actual fact. Though there are meetings about film and TV work here in the city.

DESIGN EXHIBITION

ALISA CARPENTER, Administrator, *Dragons' Association in the Performing Arts*. "The *Dragons' Association* has been in existence for some time, but let's you really get going again with a whole new costume. Now it is to reach something of a milestone with a major exhibition of costume designs and models, hand props and photographs from TV, stage and film. The works on show at the Opera House Exhibition Hall, 4th Floor May are from many of the members of the Association, drawn from all over the country. Perth,

Brisbane, Adelaide, Melbourne. We are also in process of actively seeking new members, and ask them to contact me on 083144 6212."

FASCINATING COINCIDENCES!

HEAVYWEIGHT RUTHERFORD: The most fascinating aspect of *Department of Ideas* is a series of coincidences which have occurred in relation to the play and the MTC. When I was the director of *Brave New Play*, we turned at one stage to talking about football, only to find that in two years' time we had played rugby league for electronic football clubs in Sydney.

It was also while watching football that I mentioned to fellow *Ensemble* members Alexander Bums that I had submitted some plays to the MTC. Bums was unusually non-committal but on seeing the programme by the MTC, section I noticed that too now play *Altkaiser* itself will greatly move.

The most poignant of the coincidences affecting the play deals with an eventual acceptance by the MTC, but that's a story on its own.

REPLY TO MARIETTA

JOHN WEST, Head of the Circus Circle. "There is no obligation on critics to join the Circus Circle, they are invited to do so and those who don't do not irritate the people who do join. Maria Prosser was a prominent member of the circle several years and she left after that last season.

Our funding comes from the Arts Endowment Fund — a \$14,000 this financial year and that has to pay for every expense in every year. It is not taking money from some inspiring students though I think Maria thought the money would be better used if involved in more direct applications.

Name of the *Sahara Morning Herald* once once ever belonged to the Circus. Roger Carroll was always against it, but it has *Illustrated Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph* representation. *Dancer and Drama* are both represented from all papers.

The lady has given a great contribution to the process. "Naughty Naughts."

1977

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WHISPERS RUMOURS & FACTS



Could be that the Great Australian musical writing team that has been so diverse will run out to be Barry Farrer (music) and Frank Morris (book and lyrics). Their children's musical *The Fairy's Land of Magical Jewels* staged at Melbourne's David January 1978 has been recorded by EMI with Ray Lawrence, Andrew Dignam and John Paul Young. Another children's musical, *The Big, Huge, David to Dream*, staged at Northlands Shopping Centre last Christmas with Tom Dwyer, Ben Cooper and Anne Prendergast in the cast, also has been staged as an LP by Cico. Featuring John Watson

Travis White, Robin Ramsey and Tom Dwyer. And now Barry and Frank are working on their first adult musical, which will be based on the Melbourne 30s underworld character Spyglass Taylor. That's also a former Howard Armstrong in the cast.

Karen Brodnick and Robert Carr of RWA are producing *Longing-Desires* for the Australian production of *Amos*, touring with a cast from Britain about 60's Ray and looking at other possibilities for Australia. Yvonne Joyce and Bruce Murphy (book) is to be seen in 1979 in a stage version of their TV series *George and Mildred*.

With all the TV money being poured into Australia, wonder why someone doesn't bring out the Two Romans (Sharon and Carole). They'd surely be a wow. So much talk about Ben Travençolo's *The Bird Before Tomorrow* being staged first by the cast and a still early by *The Bird Before Tomorrow*.

A new trend for who for musicals? *Love on Broadway* is looking at a new musical by Stephen Sondheim, who this time around has also written the book and lyrics. Then there's Bob Fosse's *Dances*, which uses classical and contemporary music from such people as Camille Saint-Saëns, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Richard Strauss and Maurice Strakosky. Also an

Broadway is an all-black version of *Amos*. *Tired Tumbler* is stars Emma Ball and Gilbert Price, whom Melbourne's theatre community may recall played one of the leads in the musical *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. There's going to be a Broadway revival of the Newby Broadcast *Stop The World I Want to Get Off* starring Sissy Spacek (in, it will be called simply *Stop the World*). And Stephen Sondheim's serious musical will be *weeney Todd*, based on the old melodrama and starring Angela Lansbury.

Laterality 4 *Clara Lane* is doing much better business in Melbourne than *Splash*, with standing room in most performances. And for all those doublets, ballet dancer Leanne Welch came in a marvellous performance as Zerk. Suzanne Steele later in the year is to star in *Clapham*, in the underworld for the Victorian Opera Company, to be directed by Betty Boxer. Anne Man Giller is touring producer for the film version of *Chickadee*. Also may also be seen in the production.

Is the pendulum going on swing back to those bygone days when theatre-goers possessed certain rears? I hear some managers this one of our suburban companies is going to introduce 'pleasure theatre', which is described to me, sounds very much like the old-fashioned theatre.

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OLD TOTE CRISIS

DOUGLAS FLINTOFF



There are people who find it gratifying to see the Old Tote facing liquidation. At the time of writing, mid February, heads are nodding wisely all over Australia, as the minds in them contemplate how the mighty are fallen — a lesson to all lesser theatre companies of the dangers of theatrical imperialism. Sons and daughters of

Sydney, behold, this was the Old Tote.

By the time this is read, however, it is probable that the Tote will be on its feet again, if perhaps reeling. In any case the crisis should be over and most of what is reported here may be a matter for theatre historians. This, then, is simply a report on how things stood four weeks ago.

The crisis is simply a problem of too many commitments and not enough money. The purchase of the million dollar building at O'Rourke St. Alexandria was prompted by the demands of the Opera House where there is no rehearsal or workshop space — but there is still a significant mortgage on it. This combined with a serious failure in the box-office in the second half of 1977 and it was hardly put at more ready than that led to a situation where the Tate would simply run out of money by the end of February 1978. Even the most of his successful Alan Ayckbourn trilogy. The *Norwegian* Companies felt considerably short of expenditure. Whether there is a more deep seated reason for the problems waiting when it did — as is to be found in the financial mismanagement of the company over the last few years — is a matter between the Tate and their accountants but there is no reason to look for that sort of explanation to explain the present crisis.

Indeed the Tate had expected difficulties. They had perhaps not anticipated the box-office failure of 1977 but in their submission to the Australian Council for 1979 they pointed out that they would need more money — more obviously because of their purchase of the O'Rourke St building. When their request was cut from \$980,000 to \$600,000 they approached the State Government and argued that they could be considered a State Company — if only because they are the biggest users of the Opera House land lost on the operation \$100,000 a year on their State subsidy. There was a long pause.

If anything the problem is caused by the Tate's over expanding themselves without any sort of financial parameters — a few times it might have the Federal and state subsidy to be increased. They have expanded into their designs which may or may not appear a good thing, according to what you think of the state they have done to them. In any case they have increased the number of hours of access from just under 100,000 at the Parade in 1976 to around 200,000 in 1977.

Thus there came the attention from the Australian Council. Presumably the Council saw the Tate's crisis as an opportunity to push through certain changes which they had been wanting for some time. With some speculation as to the Council's motives, these are the three points of the situation.

1. **"Democratization"** The Council has apparently been dissatisfied for years that the public should have some say in the running of publicly subsidised companies. It appears that the Tate has for some reason been allowed to apply for exemption. If implemented this proposal would presumably mean the shareholders in Tate could become members of the company. They would not have a Board of Directors to elect, however, because that is what is disapproved under point 2. Are they there together?

2. **An Official Manager.** This is another thing which the Australian Council seems to want for publicly subsidised artistic bodies, and



Old Tate Maadrobe Department, Alexandria Building



Old Tate Rehearsal Room, Alexandria Building



The Tate's recent offering at the Parade Theatre. *Die Dais and the Canary*.



The interior of the Parade Theatre?

so the Tate may be, in one case. The trouble is that under the Companies Act the official manager is supposed to be appointed by the creditors to make it one of difficulties. Apart from the statutory obligations that attach to a company as a trading company has, it requires up the idea of an official manager who is going to produce a series of financial statements to put the company in the black. We all wish him well. There is a rumour which has come to other parts of the theatre industry which is true, suggests how he is supposed to do this. It is that when the Board of Directors asked Brian Swainson when an official manager could do this they couldn't do he needed an official manager would have the \$600,000.

3. **A single artistic director.** This is something the Tate has had before, and would doubtless still like to have. At the moment Pat Collingwood and Ted Crag are theoretically in artistic control of things. There is the big new boring case of whether or not Robert Quarmby is a sort of "Macbethian artistic manager" or not both sides. There is no doubt that he has a position to exercise some personal influence for example on the program and all plays for 1978. He must have some authority if only because of his past record and reputation, and all that he has done for the Tate over the years. This is a fact acknowledged by his being called "Artistic Advisor" in addition to being on the Board.

At this point the State Government spoke up. A letter from Neville Wille, presumably written by Brian Williams was received by the Chairman of the Board. Don Turnbull. It said nothing about democratization, something of the artistic director, and as only mention of the official manager was a reference to "reformed changes" which would have to be made if the Tate was to get more money. It was in fact generally ambiguous and can be used later to prove that the State Government had any attitude which it then feels it ought to have had. It has been suggested that this letter created the push for the Australian Council — that the Board would have been prepared to compromise in spite of the reluctance of some of the more angry members but that they were left justified in holding out. This is probably over dramatizing the situation, but certainly holding out was what everyone seemed to be doing at that time. There are many possible courses of action — all accounted for by the Hungarian people in their report — which range from staying in all their theatres and getting all the money to sending up into the Parade and selling the Alexandria building. It is probable that the Board would be prepared to consider any of these as long as they knew exactly what money they would get for them. It is also probable that the Tate will stay in the Parade because it costs them now to nothing the University of New South Wales even claims a fee for them and in the Opera House because no one else would move into it. Thus leaves the Stramash Centre to be abandoned — the theatre which most people including one gathers the shareholders felt would be the most satisfying. Typical.

ILLUSION COMIQUE

REX CRAMPORN

interviewed by Roger Pulvers

I wanted to find out how he felt about the season of plays excused before his eyes by the governors of the Old Tote. Rex Cramporn is a modest man, with no taste for revenges. There is not the biting anecdote or the early personal aside. He tells the story exactly as it must have happened, and we try to understand what it all represents for Australian theatre.

The main point was to put on a season of plays without any sense of "the afternoon Bond Shepherd and three Australian plays by Patrick White, Dorothy Hewett, and Louis Nowra. Just look like anywhere else in the world."

It started when Jim Sharman and I were asked by the Old Tote to submit a proposal for

using the Seymour Centre. It had been booked by them before. We suggested a season that involved using all the theaters of the Centre with music, dance, drama and film, perhaps a modern German season. Henning Fischler was your man.

The Tote rejected the proposal as too large. They just wanted a season of plays. So we

thought out a season of five plays by the playwrights I mentioned. We were afraid cardboard prices and... but we have never seen what was happening from the Old Tote's standpoint? I mean, there were two not committed on things, as if it was all in secret or something. At the point of anger, we even found ourselves questioning what her story would really go ahead with it. But eventually they just told us they had a death flow, problems or whatever they call money there and we thought we were just being a little overly worried or something. Then there were the answers from lots of Sydney people that the Tote was going broke.

It was a few days before Christmas that Robert Quinlan called us at an office as of the Tote's disastrous plight. I remember he used those words "disastrous plight". He said there were three alternatives.

One: go into liquidation by 31 December.

Two: go into liquidation after The Car and the Cemetery had played, which would be about February.

National Theatre Awards



The National Professional Theatre Awards are now in their second year. The 1977 Awards will again be presented at the Theatre/Film Festival of the Australian National Playwrights Conference in Canberra in May.

Choice of winners rests solely on the votes of members of the theatre industry who are recognised by Equity Action designers, writers and stage crew are therefore asked to vote on the nominations listed, which are the result of a national poll of critics. There is an extra space for those who wish to vote for someone other than those nominated.

Votes received after the May 1978 deadline be considered. If you are eligible to vote fill in the form for making out a list and post to:

1977 National Theatre Awards
Theatre Australia
80 Elizabeth Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

All votes will be scrutinised in confidence by Equity and the Designers' Section by the Designers' Association, who officially declare the Awards.

BEST ACTRESS		BEST ACTRESS		BEST ACTRESS	
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The Proof of the Pudding. . .

NIDA

The National Institute of Dramatic Art Assembled by Richard Mills

A Drama School's contribution to the theatre and community is a measured one. Primarily, it runs with the number of well-trained, talented graduates the school can release into the theatre world — and how ready and personally they can take employment.

Naturally, it is more difficult to measure — the amount of 'talent' or 'personality' that a formative, to education, influences or creates. Any form of education accepts that the main form is performing ability, and develop that, individually. Any school while encouraging it to allow its mind and talent to be personal abilities, must also encourage the development of an individual identity. The extent to which it refers to 'recognise' the talent the graduate's unique experience become fundamental to the extent of training can a factory produce, is the extent of its required maintenance.

Many graduates of the National Institute of Dramatic Art have gone on to successful acting careers, notably Robin Nixon, Kate Fitzpatrick,

Judy Merson, Helen Morse, John Goss, now in The Glorious Fourth, is employed with the National Theatre Company in London. Cery (Phyllis) Gannon, MacDonnell, continues to label as some quivers, a NIDA graduate — correct, not formerly, Murray Poy of the Queensland Theatre Company, Rick Bellingham of La Brea are NIDA graduates.

More significant is that a recent survey of graduate employment, conducted by the school revealed that eighty five per cent of the total graduate force are currently employed in the theatre or related areas. No statistic was made of those who had entered through films or through Master RADN, as the American school can show such figures, although that may not be a very like comparison from the circumstances.

Of the three people that I have spoken with who were not asked to maintain their studies in NIDA, after the first year, none appear under their assistance, or that they were not able to

continue. All are currently pursuing successful careers in theatre or film, and feel that NIDA was not for them. One, who was young, feels that she might perhaps benefit now from some advanced work. All are very glad of that one year.

NIDA began in 1919 with Robert Quennell as its first director. Grants and free advanced courses were made available on the auspices of the University of New South Wales largely through the efforts of its then Vice-Chancellor.

So Philip Barker funding was by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust, passing to the Australian Council for the Arts and in 1978 to the Commonwealth Education Department. The Trust still provides much assistance in the way of costumes and props, though not money.

From the beginning, the approach was experimental. The concept was to be that of involving students in professional drama, at making the crafts and techniques of theatre while providing an atmosphere conducive to individual interest development. The object was

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to train out working theatre people, schooled in the basic skills of either acting or technical production, to expose them to professional theatre, to open doors to employment in the form of contracts, and to encourage students to end their artistic awareness.

The school under current director John Clark, still produces its three strands. There are four full time diploma courses offered at NIDA. Three year courses are acting, technical production, and design. A one year course in direction is limited to two more experienced students per year, and gives a basic concept study, three other areas combined with opportunities for direction both in the school and attached to outside companies.

Applications for all courses close in October and entry to the school is by arranged audition and interview, held throughout Australia over November-December each year. Competition is fierce, with about fifty new students each year being selected from nearly a thousand applicants. There is also an advanced course, run in conjunction with the Jane Muen Theatre — a NIDA affiliate — and a recent course in theatre administration held in early February 1977 proved to overwhelmingly successful that is a study in the reputation.

The courses are arduous, physically and mentally. Students work all day from 9 to 5 and if in production at night and weekends in the first year, the acting students have four long classes in voice, movement, language, history of theatre, acting, improvisation, and

theatre techniques.

Technical production and design students work together for the first year studying professional design, history of theatre, music, and lighting as well as life drawing classes and professional etiquette.

Actors in the second year move on to learning makeup, dialect and acting while continuing movement and history of theatre.

Technical production course includes costume studies and history of theatre. Design specialists move on to set and costume design.

In the third year, like the others the course includes singing and dancing lessons and technical students are being encouraged to follow their own special areas while maintaining studies over the whole spectrum of production and design.

All classes are in the morning, as the entire school is involved in various productions from two in the classroom. Much of the tuition is by outside specialists invited on a part time basis while attached to professional companies, or in residence.

The ABC provides assistance in the form of technical help and advice in television with expert Vivian cover film work, special effects and added administration and production. Even on a Lifetime with the third year students in a regular visitor.

I gathered some comments at random — students are kindly required not to give press interviews — while waiting to watch rehearsals.

"The first year is really the depressing one. You're all lumped in together. Second year is the heavy year — you start to get right into the techniques, to find yourself beginning to see them. That is the main year."

"It's going to be good to get out. Like, it's not exactly like this — it's a controlled environment. You come out into the real world."

"If you are doing something wrong, you die and end up a star and he will spend as much time as it takes with you. But if you don't, it comes out in front of everyone at the crucial moment. You can lose a lot of confidence."

"The atmosphere is incredible. It is a creative atmosphere where everyone is working to build something together. It is one of the most exciting things I have been involved with. The level of commitment is amazing." (Fellow director)

"The second of NIDA is that it is phenomenally well-organised, specifically non-academic. I don't yet know which director is production outside NIDA. I will take the I do know that all the doors are open to me."

The atmosphere is something that is indirectly improved in too. In all the classes I attended, where I was sometimes introduced somewhat late, I made little impression. From first year up, the students were there to do a job and my presence made no difference. An occasional eye flicked in my direction as I quipped loudly, but the lesson was unaffected. The students completely involved. Classes I found opened a third year move

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NIDA designs a scene at work

video class under Kevin Kane. The second was on bodily awareness, students being assigned to give a feeling for the experience and attitude of their bodies by moving with closed eyes, grasping distances, and feeling emotionally rather than consciously manipulating the movements.

Anthony Miller was working on vocal techniques with several pairs among students. Storing slow and soft and building up speed and volume, they would then debate the emotions occasioned by the delivery style while discussing themes in delivery and finding individual forms. The lesson seemed to aim at both polishing vocal technique and providing another avenue for role understanding. It was encouraging to note that as each finished a reading often having some high emotion flowing around Miller brought the discussion down to a very low key or pure and volume. When the next student got up to read a second relaxed atmosphere.

Betty Williams explained with a grin that her first year scene class of twelve had had a first night pre-rehearsal with the usual after play panic. She began to wake them up with scenes like physical exercises, jogging and counting, taking the second course out of its own accord. Second auditions and filming in two the role page — "I don't want any money in that scene! Now develop a — just be surprised that your breath has gone!" I had to leave to catch Williams's rehearsal.

Kevin Palmer took the technical course, George Whaley the acting. Kevin showed me around the technical premises — worked in there etc. It was surprising to see the standard of work that was being done, especially with films usually being passed around through lack of space. All productions are handled completely by students with staff rates advancing and declining or just adhering to a student director. They appear mostly in the NIDA Theatre — the old building where the Old Gate was born as an extension of NIDA in 1963.

"In a first year technical student," Kevin Palmer says, "we are looking simply for good

potential in either a stage manager or director. It's unfortunate. You go on as much as you can tell from an interview where there are no past qualifications. We give applicants a choice of one of three plays and they are asked before they come to build a set model in they would it up the play. At least that tells us whether they understand the scale enough to do a model and we discuss, at length how he would design the play, maybe light it. If he has a specialty we discuss it. At least we can find out what he doesn't know."

He goes on to explain the course, and that in the first year students are directed to create companies for much of the time. I later saw two letters to Kevin from the *Washington* on production reporting on students Moss Cooper, Larry Saunders and Murray Taylor who had been assisting in the production of *A Clockwork Orange*. I quote the last paragraph from the *Washington* production director:

"May I add that all three students who worked on *A Clockwork Orange* were a credit to NIDA, both in their work and in their interests, and we greatly value their participation in the production."

That third year graduate attachments exist, Kevin, besides giving professional experience, is a golden opportunity for students to make contacts and investigate the employment field before they are thrown on the world alone.

"In exceptional circumstances the NIDA Board of Studies will allow a student to take part projects with some professional company and complete their year in full employment with them. But all course we only do this because the companies ask — we flex in the Board's discretion. And the individual student's development according to job opportunity

rather than drop a full class of production on the workforce at a given time. I would be surprised, though, if all this year's class weren't working by early next year."

I put a few of the obvious possible criticisms of such a school to Robert Lark.

"I think basically that a theatre school is as good as its graduates. On the other hand, I've known a number of people who came from and not responded to the course — especially in the earlier years, when we were less selective and used the first year to win them out — and then go on and work successfully in the profession. I think that's a statistic."

"But the thing that worries me is how many of those who did not graduate then are now working successfully well as experienced theatre technicians in NIDA's productions."

"A lot of kids come here with talent, but are young — they are straight out of school, and have no developed work attitudes. Sometimes the shock of not being treated back for a second year will stimulate them to the attitude they need."

"My approach to student problems, professionally or personal, which often affect work — is that as long as I know about it I can do something to help. I don't age them to come to me with any worries."

"Inevitably when you come to something like NIDA you go through a period of loss of confidence. It's like a really good tennis amateur who decides to take lessons from a pro. The pro suggests that he change his grip — and his a while his game is shot to hell. But the important thing is that in the long run he will get better faster with the new technique than he would have with the old."



NIDA's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. 1978 First year students

But What About The Ingredients?

NIDA from an applicants-eye view by Bea Star (Stage name of course dahling!)

Once the process of auditioning before the professionals was an immense thought. Now it's just a walk-in!

I arrived on the appointed day and sat down with another thirty-six thirty aged applicants, who ranged from a bewilderment girl in pajamas, to a heavily retouched lady in a living memorial to Elton, to the collection of lovely kids named a little differently, with their equally different names in tow.

First off we were herded into a class room to do warm-ups (started with a NIDA student who started to back that wearing a look out on a wetting day proved him to be the spouse of Elton). The exercises included of course, the positively old slay-dap that is my name game (with the optional addition of this is my outfit for those who dared to reveal it) and other well worn routines, most in singing and dancing, and without the authority of the previous changes.

The facade of formality was shattered early with "anonymous questionnaires" that required you to fill in the number assigned to you along with such essential information as marital status, parents marital status, religious schooling (over some to prove religiously), and how often parents use the theatre. When I inquired about the necessary problem I was told it was the only person who had scored. I still had to fill in my number in spite of my occupational propensity. A nice address by the classroom headmaster provided our actual audition in which we were informed of NIDA entrance policy, duration (ten and one, women would be chosen from the hundreds of hopefuls. No explanation was given as to why there was this curiously truncated actual audition — whether the powers that be considered that this was all the business could take, or that this couldn't find all of your plays with a high enough complement of female parts — but when asked what if there were no good actresses, he told us that this could be squared in as a party but certainly no more. Why not just choose the twenty two best applicants surely there is a more equitable way to maintain satisfactory classes than this?

All auditions had two prepared pieces to do and we were split into two groups. The pastel coloured eye group was a duo to put *Home and Home* (wrong to theme. She sat, all serious scene of her father, having glasses covering thick layers of makeup reducing her to a wiggling red beside her. I performed my piece in



the end of which I was warmly asked if I had played the part before. No, of course not, but they looked delighted. When everyone had finished, the same points all had to be repeated, but this time with audiences standing in for other characters when required. If the lovely ladies were supposed to be addressing women, they chose their partners (male) when a girl chose me to play a male she was silently told to choose a male. Of course, I thought if more one play female parts they don't need so many women undergraduates. Another large lady, not quite so high frequency NIDA, went through before, having asked her Mother (and how an audition book would suit you who were a —

"Help someone I think" I volunteered delivered her speech with poise, but on seeing David Fries (and not a man — a man type of disappointment) looked a little taken by a quick flick of the wrap-around dress in clouded response.

Lunch was a sorry affair, with the next fifteen, track suited second year students attempting more than kindly conversation with us. There was a general air of reluctance as we escaped back for round one, individual interview and second audition piece.

Interview "Morning of previous face to face and examination of candidate" (OEC). On entering the interview room my professed "hello" was ignored and I asked if I might sit down. Again a man didn't want, but this time

the lady was passed then flunked, but in a dress and at the table off the way down and nothing further. The interview lasted most interested in my relationships with staff as a previous student (this where my interest lay. My previous school education was placed as, and the production of a pin book as a prop elicited the remark "I suppose you picked that from Betty's luggage cabinet this morning".

On finding out that I couldn't sing I was told to sing a song — a thirty night club song, making up the whole to, yes, the pumped track suit. An improvisation score with some — show telling, because that would be foreign to a general audience — was virtually impossible as my partner's responses were so stupid. The male interviewer actually laughed when I said in English in the corner of the corner.

In fact he seemed deeply enthralled by the real and said that a telephone call would be forthcoming shortly. But the draggled of Elton (Midge) and the old man have over ridden him for I have received a negative letter. By then it was a relief. I couldn't help but reflect on first hand knowledge I had of two unsuccessful applicants (both private school one not working for the South Australian Film Corporation, and the other having been graduated from RADA).

If anyone should be applying in NIDA, for next year's intake, a few tips. Try not to be a woman. If you're, then for all you're worth and prove you're hard down to your team, turn up in the room, not away behind you can find and suffering looking rehearsal seats, cultivate a personality but not adolescent nose look (and don't forget to call everyone during. Plus turn a camp and long long poor boy/born to do what you're worth he can in the corner while you're performing.

Now grating that may be but neither preparation, were opinions and more winking, and though admission when there are so many candidates is not expected a degree of manipulation and consideration is. In making direct attacks of serious and obvious transgressions are part of being an actor. NIDA may find it sensible to include these in the course, but if because it is the major regional training establishment on the money and hence has great competition for places, a link is afforded to select from a kind of socio-political or group, I have no reputation and standards will suffer.

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PERTH FESTIVAL

Should a theatre feel apologetic about being entertaining.

MARGARET LUXE

The Norman Conquest by **Alan Ayckbourn**, National Theatre Company at the Playhouse Perth, W.A. (Opened 3 February 1978. Director: Stephen Barry; Designer: **Bob Russell**; Lighting Designer: **Tony Youdine**; Stage Manager: **Christine Randall**; Norman, **Paul Mann**; Tom, **Robert Feggattier**; Sarah, **Rosemary Barr**; Rex, **Edgar Matheis**; Beth, **Judy Mann**; Anne, **Leith Taylor**.

Ayckbourn's trilogy *The Norman Conquest* launches a new season at the Perth Playhouse, also its new director, Stephen Barry, and the drama segment of the 1978 Festival of Perth. *Conquest* were divided on the suitability of the vehicle to carry its burden. Did the fact that it is funny make it too trivial? Did the fact that it was a play cycle, ie seasons, reduce it? Should a theatre feel apologetic about being entertaining at a time when it ought to be Making a Cultural Mark?

The play is satiric Ayckbourn, even 1974, funny without the blackness or even bleakness that made critics give his later plays more serious consideration. It also takes the jargon element of the previous plays to the limit but two simultaneous dinner parties, not two co-existing but rather three consecutive kitchens, but rather a complex pattern of simultaneously developing scenes in three different areas, split up into three different plays. The seasons of one play turn into the seasons in another, the quarrels of one are resolved elsewhere. The sheer delight of off-hand virtuosity would be worthy of attention even if Ayckbourn didn't manage to make so many witty and finely focused observations about manners, attitudes and stereotypes encountered "living in the twentieth".

The tale is funny when you're in the know, but also, some potential audience (especially those not in the habit of keeping up with theatre news) are put off by the fear that this will turn out to be something dauntingly medieval. In fact, of

course, the Norman who makes the Conquests is a very sensitive character—totally asexual—but to all his women but makes them happy. He's played by Paul Mann in an assortment of dreadful clothes, and a sense of humour that ranges from the ironic to the gently wicked. (Why does he spend so much playing stuffed shirts on television, one wonders?)

The women who are content (if that's the right verb to go with content) are Lady Mann, hilarious as Norman's consistently short-sighted and spitty wife, who proves rather laughably vulnerable to his charms all over again, his unmarried sister-in-law (Leith Taylor) who is a marvelously complex creature of witwound charms, renegade longings and an ungratified sense of reality, and his other sister-in-law, a honey, totally unreasonable creature, who lumps her husband unrelentingly, but despite her intense disapproval of Norman (or because of it?) tells stories to his charms. Rosemary Barr shows a fair for elegance, and her movements suggest lovely nuances of upper-middle-class pretension. One cannot help comparing her style to that of Penelope Keith who played the role in London, but the similarity does not discredit her performance.

All three of the women become more likable in the second play, and although Lady Mann was at ease from the start, there was a striking improvement in the more subtle playing of both Leith Taylor (who toned down her gestures) and Rosemary Barr (who became funnier and although still remarkably sweet, rather less virtuous.)

As the long-winding Reg (then called husband) Edgar Matheis created a pretty little man, much given to the odd barking laugh at his own jokes, and liberally correct about board games. There is a marvelous sequence in *Along Together*, where he not only explains some ludicrously impossible rules of a game he invented himself, but gives a finished impression of chess-pieces in action to prove a point.

Bob Feggattier plays the slow-witted wit, the has difficulty even persuading rats to come out of holes and half-hearted savior to the unmarried sister, with an engaging affability that makes the character from the borders of irony. Royal and his pharos are so clearly aware well that one half hopes he'll finally take the plunge and declare himself, even if one does wish the girl could land herself a more promising lover.

The production is luxuriously without being slow. Time is taken to establish

character, bits of business are related, miniature objects take on a personality of their own (like the rug, some of memorable seductions, or the too-small chair obviously destined for the largest and slowest guest) given the demanding and presumably gratuitous (maybe another upstairs, establishes an invisible presence).

So, Russell's sets are practical and just attractive enough not to be boring even when the setting is supposed to be bourgeois and subtly oppressive. It suggests a handy home in need of refreshing and a new life.

It's a good lively start to the season, and it might even lure those notorious "mobile of the road" audiences back to the theatre.

From the disappointing to the mainly sublime

COLIN GIBBEN

Orsola by William Shakespeare. Chichester Festival Theatre Company at the Concert Hall, Perth, W.A. (Opened 4 February, 1978. Director: **Peter Goss**; Designer: **Peter James**; Orsola, **Ruth Mitchell**; Liza, **Ray DeLoraine**; Desdemona, **Warren Deane**; Portia, **Rodrigue**; **Tom**, **Robinson**; **Urania**, **Joan Joyce**; **Cassio**, **Michael Carmichael**; **Brabantio**, **Nigel Strick**; **London**, **Paul Maxwell**; Duke of Venice, **Max Robinson**; **Guarino**, **Patric Bagden**; **Bianca**, **Joananne Marling**; **Montano**, **Philip Anthony**; **Cyprio**, **Geoffrey Gifford**; **Officer**, **Alan Hayward**; **Mis-singer**, **Harry Gale**; **Soldiers**, **Oliver Johnston**, **John Patrick**; **Servants** etc., **Michael Beattie**, **John Newton**, **Ellen Cooper**, **Roberta Symes**, **Joanna Turner**.

The Rape of Lucretia by Ben Jonson. Drama W.A. Opera Company with Festival of Perth at the Deane Theatre, Perth, W.A. (Opened 8 February, 1978. Musical Director and Principal Conductor: **Alan Abbott**; Producer: **William Greenaway**; Designer, **Geoffrey Maxwell**; Stage Manager, **Rae Campbell Gabbie**; Male Chorus: **Darold Storey**; Female Chorus:

Daphne Harris, Catherine, GRR Arnold
Amos, Ian Warburton, Jacqueline Lyden
Yvonne, Loretta Linsley, Margaret
Barnes, Anna Williams, Lorna Rossella
Parrar.

There exists an apocryphal story about Shakespeare and his leading actor Richard Burbage. It seems that they were getting sloshed together one day in the Mermaid Tavern. More than half full of Barbours brandy, Burbage prodded a handmaiden forlornly into the pigeonhole of the apartment crew from Stratford and declared to that recumbent, drowsed warrior which had so often disturbed the eels in the frills of the Globe: 'Willie, laddee, anything you can write, I can act'. Those abstracted, dreamlike eyes narrowed for an instant but Shakespeare said nothing. Next day, however, he began work on *Othello*.

The play can prove intolerable to the hithergoing airport actor, and the means are structural. It is a play who leads us by the hand through the action, who takes us into his confidence in the more intimate, clasp-up, snipe-nudge soliloquies. *Othello* is more about and about personified, with a fine but distinctly distancing line in somewhat windy phrase.

I've always thought of *Othello* as the sort of chap who would be a disaster at a dinner party. While the soup got cold he would be regaling the company with outrageous whoopery about his experiences among the Antipodophages, incidentally a little without of before or since (perhaps they knew when they were laced). Before the fish course was done he would be interdroping exotic oceanic scenarios such as 'the Pacific sea where my current and compass course o're took riding off he had kept close on to the Porpoises and the Herringbone', or sounding off about his prowess in dealing with the more resolute officers of Aleppo, doubtless demonstrating his skill by leaning across the mahogany and lifting a fellow diner bodily from his chair by the lapels to show how he took by the throat the cream-caked dog and smote him—THUS! All in all, decidedly heavy weather among the crop, show-white napery and Waterford crystal.

Iago is a fine defiler of such propensity and pretension. When he tells Rodrigo that Desdemona loves *Othello* 'not for bragging and telling fantastical lies', we as the walls tend to go along with him. He also has a fine unimagined basketry which appeals to the folk in Agam in an all. There is no point in the meditation telling us we should loathe such a creature: all the world loves an arch bastard, just so long as we are not the ones on the wrong end of his escapades.

Another aspect of the play which makes it difficult to present credibly is that the action depends on *Othello* believing a palpable lie. The problem is to make him do so without appearing stupid or forgoing our belief in his heroic stature. Uniformly the play as it stands is not so much help as some. Unlike *The Winter's Tale* for example it will not work reasonably

well if you just play it straight and let the dramatic structure take care of things for you.

All of which means that a production cannot afford to be cautious and middle-of-the-road but must be creative and adventurous if it is to make us sit up, which in precisely where the Chebanov production fell down. It was in the main positionally and sincerely performed but rarely provided those insights which we rightly ask of a good production of such a well-known classic. I had expected more, since the director Peter Dean had amply demonstrated in both the TV series *An Age of Kings* and *The Spread of the Eagle* that he is an intelligent and perceptive interpreter of Shakespeare, capable of translating his insights into relevant stage action.

I would have expected the nineteenth-century British Empire setting of the play to produce new insights as often lost in fancy dress Elizabethan versions, but except for Roy Dotson's Iago the context did not seem to have informed the actors' work, the setting was largely gratuitous and the performance would have worked equally the same in Elizabethan costume. Keith Michell gave an honest, straightforward interpretation of the role of *Othello*, although at times the gestures and vocal gestures seemed to bear the stamp of the actor's personal style rather than be the result of a conception of the part. Nyma Datta-Parrar's Desdemona was effusive and graceful, but lacked the intensity which the part calls for (it has always seemed to me one of the supreme virtues of the play that the more passionate Desdemona is, the more will *Othello* be swayed to credit that she might be unfaithful). Jane Laps's Emilia has been much praised for a sensitivity to others lacking in the part, but again I find myself in a double bind. I have always thought that Emilia's earthy peasant pragmatism, juxtaposed to the more sophisticated Desdemona's simple virtue one of the strong dramatic contrasts of the play, a contrast which Miss Laps's interpretation naturally diminished. Rodrigo was played as the usual well-born Dickenson rather than the more nasal Andrew Agnewish abroad, but still with the high pitched voice suggesting that his outbursts were too tight. And those Cypriots! Perhaps they are an irredeemable lot, what one critic describes as 'beasts who are no better than they should be and baser than men'. The girls were all beautiful, bouncy and brash with lots of Ceresianque flourish, leftovers from the choros of some theatrical *Gayle* dance company, the men were traditional Greek costume, but contrived to look like uncomfortable extras, an entire and unsuccessfully made up. It was as though the Concert Hall manager Nigel Foxcroft had been asked to fill out the company by pressing into service younger members of the chorus and his staff, like Patsell discarded, urgent sergents, younger sons to younger brothers, revivified together and custom made, the members of a solid world and a long peace.

Which leaves me to commend Roy Dotson's Iago, the only performance

which seemed conceived and continuously tuned in to the context in which the play was set. Here was the porkbarrel, long-serving *Sarajvo*, the excellent non-committal officer who effectively runs the Regiment but is not for close reasons, considered either tender under the Sandhurst man Casson. As the Iago unfolds to us his learn about his wife's infidelity a tight man smile plays on his lips, which brought to my mind the flinched cold-eyed smile of Erich Powell as he speaks of 'repatriating British-born immigrants'. Behind that, Iago's still upper lip a ghastly countenance of every given away 'nothing all within'. A brilliantly conceived and executed performance.

The Perth Concert Hall was a disastrous place to present this (or indeed any) play. Since this *Othello* was designed for a Globe style open-air theatre, of which Perth has a fine example in the Octagon, the inappropriateness of venue was all the more glaring. Doubtless considerations of finance—the Octagon seats only about 700—forced the choice, and I suppose we must be glad that the play was not relegated to that aeroplane hangar which elephant the Entertainment Centre. But people could not hear halfway back in the Concert Hall, and when one adds the two-dollar up-off for the programme (leftover from the Chebanov, which told us much about *The Apple Cart* as well) I can imagine many a *scold* scolded.

But from the disappointing to the mainly sublime—Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucrece*. With no claims to contemporaneity in twentieth century opera I have nevertheless always been bowled over by Britten's opera. No wonder this one was greeted with such enthusiasm on its first appearance. Britten has managed to bring intellectual weight to a genre often condemned for rank melodramatic plotting, self-indulgent lyricism and uncut songing.

Britten's scorebook informs the very structure, using two chorus figures not only to provide a Byzantineque link between a pagan story of virtue and the Christianity which was 500 years old, but to add weight through recurrence and counterpoint reminiscent of the *Daughters* in a Bach Passion. The music is austere and classical in all the best connotations of those terms, with a simplicity which makes its sophistication and a sparseness and therefore all the more effective use of systems. Alan Aldred's conducting was taut and controlled, the singing generally confident and only occasionally incongruous.

One does have a quibble with the design, however. The stage is heavily dressed, Lucrece's bedroom mechanical rather than Roman, with even a hint of midday's bombast. The revolve was not exploited for its possibilities in changed setting, and the mechanics of staging tended to militate against the fragile fabric of such a piece. Lucrece's bed for example was a narrow couch. Perhaps I am too unkind with Shakespeare's conception, all drapery and heavy breathing, but this couch looked unlikely for a comfortable nap, let alone accommodating a rampaging Tarquin.

When at one point he leaped onto it, the universal thought sprang to mind that he might be about to replace a faulty lightbulb. Nor did the lurching on and off in the half-light help. But miraculously Britain was well served, and I will especially carry in mind the elegant and powerful Male Chorus of Gerald Stern, masterfully and astutely using The Western Australian Opera Company to be congratulated for their expertise in presenting a highlight of the Festival.

Particularly in view of the problems... this production must be counted a success.

CLIFF GILLAN

The Wakefield Mystery Plays modernised by **Max Jones**. Festival of Perth, University Performing Groups presents 1978 New Fortune Company, New Fortune Theatre, Perth, W.A. Opened 12 February 1978

Directors: **John Milson**; Design: **Amanda Hearn**; Musical Director: **Ben Macpherson**; Stage Manager: **Neil Godfrey**; With **Peter Carroll**, **Max Jones**, **James Beattie** and **Elizabeth Colebrook**.

Each of the last three Festivals in Perth has seen a fruitful collaboration between director John Milson and University Performing Groups. The 1977 Festival as well as the current one, has seen the participation also of Sydney actor, Peter Carroll, making a truce relationship particularly appropriate in the specifically religious drama chosen for performance, T.S. Eliot's *Murder In The Cathedral* and the Wakefield Mystery Plays.

I must confess to having had considerable doubt about the success of a Festival season of the Wakefield Mystery Plays. The doubt was not connected with Milson's capacity to effectively utilise the vast playing area and many levels of the New Fortune Theatre, (prior he had already proved this capacity with his 1976 *Fairy Queen*), and one could in any case see the New Fortune being well suited to the episodic character of the Wakefield plays. Nor was there any doubt that Carroll, as the featured performer, could use his considerable talents in ensuring a point of concentration and focus for the sprawling action of even a truncated version of the full Wakefield cycle. And finally, successful union with theatre colleagues in the past by both director and leading actor seems to augur similarly successful collaboration.

My doubts were simply in connection with the choice of the Wakefield Mysteries as a Festival offering. Two huge problems

seemed to me connected with this choice. Firstly the cultural context in which these products of medieval party were to be presented, that of suburban Australia in the late '70s, seemed to militate against both the possibility of an adequate recreation of the spirit of the cycle, and against large scale interest in the community generally.

On last night, therefore, I was prepared to be a little bored. I was, however, surprised and delighted to discover that Prof. Max Jones' entirely new script provided a most workable text, conveying with ease much of the spirit of broad colloquial humour leavened with reverence in which these plays must first have been presented. Director John Milson made the most of this script, and also gave full rein to his powers both of orchestration of movement and flow across the vast area and triple levels of his stage, and as a director of the properly theatrical effect, thereby ensuring that the paganism of episodes from creation through Lucifer's rebellion, the fall of man, the slaughter of Abel, the Flood, the Age of the Prophets, the nativity and the Herodian massacre of the innocents, was constantly lively, never digressing into the static declamation I had feared. Only during the latter half of the Herodian episode, the last before intermission and the longest by a good deal, did I feel that the pace, energy and vigour of the production had begun to flag.

The second half, made up basically of the key episodes in the life and passion of Christ, with a Descent sequence at the end to complete the long cycle of the sacred history, I felt to be less interesting and dynamic as theatre, more frequently succumbing to the demands of paganism than of drama. This was despite what one thinks of as an inherently more dramatic action (in the New Testament material) and a very fine performance as Christ by Peter Carroll (a startling contrast to his Noah earlier on, a little masterpiece of broad comic acting).

The standard of acting by a largely student cast supported by such seasoned performers as James Beattie (Judas), Max Jones (Herod), Elizabeth Colebrook (Mary Magdalene) and of course Peter Carroll was uniformly good. It seems a little unfair to single out such as Karl Zwarg in Lucifer and Desmond Lacey as Cain from a cast in which so many student performers did so well in such a variety of roles. Design for the production, a vast undertaking, was by student designer Amanda Hearn and was generally extremely effective in terms of both costume and set.

On the whole, and particularly in view of the problems outlined earlier, this production of the Wakefield Mystery Plays must be counted a success. I will be interested to know at the end of the season whether, despite a good text, paganism (in the whole) editing of the Cycle, amateurism and sympathetic direction and a generally high level of performance, the dusty antiquarian and overly religious aura which surrounds the very tale of the production, does not diminish the happily hedonistic heartiness of Perth from attending.

The heart might be in the right place but the dramaturgical evidence isn't.

ACK HERRID

Archais by **Tim Gooding**. Hospital Theatre Foundation at the Playbox, Melbourne. Vis. Opened 12 February, 1978. Director: **Adam Selman**; Designer: **Peter Carrigan**; Audio Assistant: **Rudi Symons**; Lighting Design: **John Barrett**; Stage Manager: **Geordie Matthews**.

Act de Luxe: **Max Philippou**; Violin: **Jeanette Gullies**; Angel Super: **Mark Wright**; Paghans: **Greene Blundell**.

This article represents a change in my general policy of not reviewing the works of Australian contemporaries. I've done this because of a suspicion about the atmosphere: a critical notice might be seen as sour grapes, a favourable one as a buttering-up. All that can be said, as I now step into the fray, is that I am delighted to see a wealth and diversity of fine new Australian plays, and thus that the perspective from which I write, whether in anger or gladness.

Tim Gooding's *Archais* is Hospital's (marginal) main theatre production. The previous show, *The Elaboration of Stephen Franklin*, was entrepreneurial from Sydney and has since thankfully been exported to where it belongs, the West End, the home of camp obnoxious theatre.

That *Archais* was first workshopped at the 1977 Australian National Playwrights' Conference and most heartily received is an unhappy reflection on the critical climate of that convocation. All kinds of excuses and objections should have been issued out before it landed on the doorsteps of Minerva and Hospital. The Conference has not done a service to Tim Gooding.

The play sings out for a thorough reevaluation, the kind of procedure, for example, that actors, director and writer working critically, constructively, and collaboratively in a theatre for some weeks can provide. A single yet amiable detachment is required, particularly on the part of the director. A director who can pass the following sentiments as a programme note would not seem on the face of it to possess these attributes:

"The games we play are not good or



Angel (Neil Magie) and Lucifer (Grace Hindsell) in Magie's *Rock 'n' Roll*

bad—they are merely the 'protective skin' of 'bad behaviour patterns' that will allow us to come closer to our neighbours without burning ourselves or them... *Rock 'n' Roll* is about the 'skin' of the 'war and pest' war baby' generation—I cried (almost) when I saw the final results of an unloved generation...Thanks Tim for seeing it, and the rest for expressing it'

The major failure of communication in *Rock 'n' Roll* belongs to the author and not the theme. The play quite simply lacks a strong dramatic centre and its two lead legs, it is too loose, too cluttered and static. The heart might be in the right place, but the dramaturgical evidence isn't. Within the world of the play, we really can't so know why, or how, the four disaffected rock freaks decide or are compelled to engage in a suicide flight. That the play is circumstantial is not enough; it is merely short on the appropriate pain, despair, and fury.

Allusions to World War II, tail-gunsners, Hiroshima, the children of the bomb, are not sufficient unless they are dramatically integrated and plausibly generated. Similarly with allusions to the more recent (and romantic) side of rock mythology, its purported revolutionary nature, its alleged later sell-out to commercialism etc. Unless they are convincingly exhibited into the action-matrix of the play, they seem rather tedious.

There is no such thing as 'healing music' (only rock 'n' roll). The healing has to be found within ourselves. To believe in 'healing music' is to believe in a surrogate and vicarious world, an occupation at the opposite pole to revelation, alternative scenes, anarchy, anarchy (etc), and one that in the end is a potential prey to fascism or the rock suburban and hamletian cults of a blasphemy.

The play endures itself, it doesn't seem aware of a more satirical and positive eye on all this, as is the master of this genre, Sam Shepard. Music is ultimately the final movement (to improvise on the

director's star metaphor) imaginatively for the soul, the self etc, but will not bear a quasi-religious, metaphysical or political burden as itself, regardless of all the legends.

Stripped of the camouflage concerning rock'n'roll, circus, show, self teachers, war etc, *Rock 'n' Roll* gropes towards dealing with four characters (respectively rootless, over-burdened, comically naïve and naïve), whose separations have led to if the play had concentrated more on feeling and delving the characters and their relations than a lot of things it is attempting to say might have emerged organically and not have had the sense of being imposed. The other direction would have been simply to create a spunky rock musical. In this production, there seems to be a basic confusion about these possibilities.

Rock 'n' Roll begins off with an oriented hip monologue that unfortunately reminded me of Hecateo Williams's much-admired gibberish in *An/De*. Mia Phipps manfully, heroically, stroited through it all to arrive at a song, "Just Because". Ironically, that song and a few moments as much as all the preceding effusions.

The best patches in the whole evening are those in which characters sing songs (especially, God hymns), contend with each other dramatically, or peel off some facts about their existence.

Under the circumstances, *Neil Magie*, *Grace Hindsell*, *Mia Phipps* (who has by far the most indigestible role) and *Jeanne Cullen* all acquit themselves with grit and spirit. *Neil Magie* cleverly takes her character on a journey (see discussion to me). *Grace Hindsell*, too adroit at times, will all the tricks of the trade, brings off a couple of most affecting songs. Too often, however, the actors are not given enough to get their teeth into. A good image appears (like the man swimming in the ocean with a transome strapped to his back) and it is quickly fogged to extinction. As in the best of Sam Shepard, the play should swim with such images,

left alone to exhilarate and arouse the imaginations of the audience. Actors creatively used, three upon, the kind of electricity emanating from the crowd. A top example of this was provided by *Neil Magie* when she sang her song in the last act with *Breathless* aplomb—hard, earthy, anguished, gut right from the ovaries.

The *Playbox* stage is an awkward one—high and naked to about the heads of the seated audience. Peter Corrigan, whose design life has been dedicated to enabling, inspiring, the actor to get on with the job, seems to have been defeated here or lowered his standards far more. The electric chairs, though poignantly deployed, don't add a lot to the sense of the play, unless primarily, symbolically he wished to electrify the play and its characters is a *Playbox*.

Rock 'n' Roll has made an unapologetic choice with this play, especially as an opener (though normally they haven't gone for a safe piece of naturalism). Once having made the choice, however, I think they should've stepped in and either popped it up (more songs, routines, choreography, rap etc) or firmly and sympathetically leashed it into a more substantial and coherent shape. All that said, it is really the job, the craft, the art, or the writer to develop his own critical faculties, to cultivate in himself the ability to stand back from his beloved work and judge it, to put it through the most severe chop-axe test, to imagine the worst, and then maybe the best will imaginatively survive.

The summer of our content.

JOHN LARKIN

Cop Out Melbourne Theatre Co, Russell Street, Theatre

King Around the Moon MTC, Athenaeum Theatre

A Chorus Line J.C. Williamson Her Majesty's Theatre

Sole To Sole Sydney Comedy Theatre

A Mid World My Master Australian Film Festival Group From Factory

Cop Out interrupted what had been a most successful season by the Melbourne Theatre Company at Russell Street. A new Australian play by Cliff Green, it probably suffered to some extent by coming after *Bird Williams's The Chalk*, which is as hard as to follow, but considered alone, it has to be seen as a good idea gone wrong. The story is about a commercial TV station and its police drama series, a subject matter, if not dear, to Mr Green, as he used to write scripts for *Homicide* and *Melbick Police*. The events are the misadventures of the average machine factory and its desperate people as they fantasize on giving the viewers what they

want. There is a black comedy side as well with the strait "police" taking their parts too literally and dealing with a scriptwriter who is a threat by wanting to change them. The script suffers from some overstatement of the obvious and moralism too much, while the direction, by Paul Kane is not disciplined enough as that contracting also results. But there was a true "police" performance by Frank Wilson, caricatured himself, who has now found a new career as a character actor in Melbourne theatre, closely followed by Jonathan Hardy as the ex-patriate writer, whose promise of a golden goose turns into a lame, lame duck.

The M.T.C. classic season at the Athenaeum, which was on a long run of success, has been redeemed by *Step Around the Moon*. Under John Sumner's direction, it has been lifted to a high level of clarity, morality, wit and style, with superb set by Anna France, of the conservatory in which *Amos*'s people act out their redemption from the not-really-to-beat-life. A strong selection of players from the M.T.C. classic rep., at last cast correctly, presented several highly individual offerings, the best of which came from David Downer as the twin brothers Hugh and Freddie, and Bruce Wylie as the damaged secretary Bambarley. Irene Incester as Madame Desroberts, the true beauty with wings of silk, and Sandy Goss as the dancing Lady looks Ron Chalker's characteristically was dramatic, also.

A *Christmas Love* has swept in from Sydney to Her Majesty's to pump Melbourne full of post-Christmas adventure and repetitive adjectives and have both body and mind aching for long after the experience. The flaws were a few flat spots in the ongoing some Australian women among the American, and a little too much pathos poured off for love. But these seem forgotten in the pleasure of being so stimulated by the music, the words, the releases and the dancing which spin us up out of our seats and into great witty delights. Not as event to be analysed, simply one to enjoy.

A pre-Christmas treat which exceeded expectations was *Juke* by *Juke* by *Sondheim*, at the Comedy. The better reception than it got in Sydney was no doubt due to the improved expertise of Bartholomew John, Bill Perryman and Geraldine Morrow, now more familiar from experience and able to refine the numbers. But it is believed the show got a great lift from the new presence of Noel Farrow, the composer and go-between, who at 45 had at his most funny and ironic. The others, as did the audience, had a very positive response to him.

The Australian Performing Group, after a busy 1977, got going early for the New Year with *A Mad World, My Master*, at the Pons Factory, which enabled them to be their best at their most ingenious and adventurous. A black comedy by English dramatist Caryl Churchill, which leaves nobody unscathed in a class war, it is a brilliant (if translatable) post-script to the Queen's Silver Jubilee year, thanks to actors Tim Robertson, Bruce Spence and Larry Dwyer and the A.P.G. collective for deciding to get on with a production to get

us thinking about our society and corruption.

Meanwhile, Melbourne needed the output:

The value of the play lies in its essential compassion for people.

IAN ROBINSON

Don, Fish, Sea & W by **Pam Gems**, Melbourne Theatre Company and Peninsula Productions Pty Ltd, Russell Street, Melbourne, Yrs Opened 24 January 1978 Director, **George Ogilvie**, Designer **Marion Marshall**, W, **Vivienne Garrett**; Don, **Nancye Hayes**; Fish **Carol Barnes**; Sea **Phil Bishop**.

To most Australians, including Australian critics, "to criticise" means to mean "to find fault with". But I believe that the central role of the critic is to point to what is valuable or useful or notable in any work, to say what it is that an audience might get out of it.

To do this it is sometimes necessary to discourage false expectations of a play by also saying what it is not. The most important misconception to correct about *Don, Fish, Sea and W* is that it is a feminist tract, a poem of feminist theatre. This is by no means the case. The lasting impression one has of the play is that it is an humane and caring piece of writing. The fact that the four characters in it are all women seems almost incidental — the value of the play lies in its essential compassion for people.

Of course, being a play by a woman about women, the trials and tribulations, vicissitudes and imbalances of the second sex provide the specific and concrete occasion for the expression of this concern. But Pam Gems does not seem to be involved in making political or philosophical points about women in general. Her intention

seems to be to expose us to a short period in the lives of four women in order to present them both as women and persons.

Set out in simple terms, the plot unfolds of *Don, Fish, Sea and W*. The action takes place in a London flat inhabited by four diverse females. W is heavily into yoga and mysticism. Housewife Don's husband has left her, kidnapped their children, and fled overseas. Fish is a political activist who has split with her boyfriend. Sea is a writer who is making extra money on the side working as an escort girl, in order to fulfil her ambition to study marine biology in Hawaii.

W eventually collapses from exhaustion, and comes back from hospital a changed person, mainly due to the pain she is in. Don finally gets her children back. Fish cannot live with her own disaffection about her lost lover and commits suicide. Sea finally accommodates all her money and buys her ticket to Hawaii. The difference between this and the soap opera in Pam Gems' real concern for the characters she has created and her skill in presenting them with great depth and understanding.

The playwright has been well served by the M.T.C. production. George Ogilvie, by recording outside the M.T.C. regulars, has put together a very talented cast. The four actors in question — Vivienne Garrett, Nancye Hayes, Carol Barnes and Phil Bishop — give sustained and sensitive performances. The director and cast have achieved a real sense of actors playing together rather than playing in individuals to an audience, an ensemble feel often missing from M.T.C. productions.

George Ogilvie has created a balanced and well-paced actors, although the relationship he wished to set up between actor and audience was not always clear. Sometimes we were unsure whether we were expected to be invisible viewers through the fourth wall, or a palpable presence sharing jokes and thoughts with the characters and being visibly shown off to by them.

Designer Marion Marshall has created the road towards overstatement in recent M.T.C. acts and given us the very minimal amount of clutter which perfectly supports



Nancye Hayes (Don), Vivienne Garrett



Carol Barnes (Fish), Nancy Hayes (Dum),
in *Breaker Morant* (Star 54)
Photo: David Parker

the action without getting in its way. The most satisfying thing about the play was its ultimately depressed and depressing view of life. Despite all her beauty, Pam Gross seems unable to see her character in any but a pessimistic way. She offers us no way out, no glimpse of hope, no light at the end of the tunnel.

One is getting a bit tired these days of being told it is as if. What's anyone got a realistic vision of what it might be as, at least, how we might begin to get there?

Possibly the best thing
the MTC have
presented at the
Athenaeum since they
took it over.

RAYMOND STANLEY

Breaker Morant by Kenneth Ross, Mel
bourne Theatre Company, Athenaeum Theatre,
Melbourne: Opened 24 February 1978.

Directed and designed by John Sumner.

'Breaker' Morant, Timotheus Greenidge;
George Warran *Geary Bagg*; Peter Handcock,
John Blackburn (in Interrogation, President of
Court Martial, *Berry Mills*); 2nd Interrogator,
Dr Johnson, Officer *Edward Maguire* (in
Interrogation Mr Robinson Officer, Colonel
Hamilton *Anthony Hawkins*; Major Thomas,
Jonathan Hardy; Major Bates *Gordon
Maguire*; Kitchener, *Simon Gilhenny*;
Sergeant, Major Drummond, *Rob Macgregor*;
Trooper, Trooper Bells, Trooper, *Gerry Brown*;
Corporal, Captain Taylor, Corporal, *Michael
Edgar*; Trooper, Corporal Stuart, Trooper,
Pop Brindley; Trooper, Van Boven, *Trigant*,
Joe Sandilands, Trooper, Officer, Trooper,
Peter Quinn Officer, David Baser, Trooper,
Michael Moore.

With the possible exception of *The Wild
Duck*, *Breaker Morant* is the best thing
the Melbourne Theatre Company has
presented at the Athenaeum since it took
over the one-time cinema building last year.

Harry Morant, the son of an English
admiral and born in Devon, came to
Australia about 1884, when he was first
employed on cattle stations shearing and
breaking in horses. Later he became a
book poet and a contributor to *The
Melburnian* and other publications.

On outbreak of the Boer War Morant
enlisted and became a lieutenant. Follow-
ing the orders of a senior officer (and going
against his own instincts) he and fellow
lieutenant Handcock had Boer prisoners
court-martialled and then for summarily
executed. Because of this the two officers
were themselves court-martialled. The
senior officer who gave the orders had
star died and, although the original
instructions were said to have come from
Kitchener, they were executed.

After a rather splendid beginning,
establishing the various characters, it
rapidly becomes a fascinating documenta-
ry type drama. It is mainly centered
around the agreed court-martial with
flashbacks. Possibly author Kenneth Ross
has sometimes stuck too closely to fact
and, not knowing enough of the main
characters' backgrounds, has not dared to
guess or elaborate, and so somehow the
roles consistently appear under-written.

Director Sumner has in the main
achieved one of his major jobs, near
perfecting useful studies of the period and
strong lighting effects. Sumner has,
however, failed to restrain his customary
tendency to play for cheap laughs, as for
instance the heavy parade stamping of feet
when certain soldiers go in and out of the
arena box.

In most cases members of the MTC
excel in performance. In the title role
Timotheus Greenidge provides a rounded
character with a sense of gaily humour,
manages to convey well Morant's more
intellectual side and also deftly handles the
recitation of his poetry. He is well backed
by John Sumner and Gary Day as the two
soldiers court-martialled with him. Out-
standing as the President of the Court is
Barry Hill, and Gerard Maguire makes a
fine prosecuting officer, whilst Edward
Maguire, Anthony Hawkins and Michael
Edgar provide several telling scenes.

The only really discordant note in the
production for me (and here it is obvious
others are not in agreement) is the
interpretation of the defence officer by
Jonathan Hardy. For some odd reason,
although clearly written, brought and
probably much more effective had it been
performed that way, Hardy builds up a
mild, bumbling, amusing character which
has echoes of Peter Sellers, Woody Allen,
Dennis Haffman and goodness knows who
it frequently goes against the lines and, for
me at least, gives and spills some
otherwise fine ensemble playing.

I understand two screenplays have
already been written about Morant but
apparently have not been acceptable.
Maybe someone will pick up this script by
Kenneth Ross, which would appear to be
ideal film material.



RICHARD FOTHERINGHAM

Flight Path by Beverly Mahoney,
Queensland Theatre Company at S-G 10
Theatre, Brisbane, Queensland: Opened 23
January 1978.

Director *Alice Edwards*; Design, *Flora
Phillips*; Stage Manager, *Nick Mackay*;
Sounding, Lighting Design, *Gordon
Campbell*.

Mary, *Pat Thomson*; Liz, *Mark
Raftery*; Billy, *Douglas Holroyd*; Ben,
Charm Crowther; Tony, *David Chapple*;
Sally, *Susan Pop Ralston*; Andrew, *Roger
Haweswood*; Police Sergeant, *Russell
Haweswood*; Police Constable, *Ron Leggo*.

There were sixty-three entries for the
Q.T.C.'s Playwriting Competition, and
Beverly Mahoney's *Flight Path* was the
unanimous choice of the three judges. One
of them, the Q.T.C.'s Artistic Director
Alan Edwards, has directed the subse-
quent production, and I'm told that all
concerned have worked hard to make the
script live. They've been rewarded by a
passing, unexpected, but undeniable
commercial success.

Flight Path compares the lives of two
Brisbane women, Mary, a single woman
with at least four children, lives at Crab
Island—an extremely depressed bay area
soon to be razed for airport runway
extensions. Susan 'the daughter of Queens-
land's most outspoken politician' lives at
Hamilton-Birnie's Frank or North
Shore, but geographically at the other end
of the same airport. The rich and the poor
both have their cardigans shattered, and
the principal idea behind the play is that
two women so different in their class
backgrounds can have their lives shattered
regardless of their bank balances.

In the original script Mary's son Jim
breaks into the Hamilton house (stunt on
film) and brags Susan when she catches
him; but that is the only link between the
two households. The process of script
revision has turned what another judge
called an 'Australian study of two women'
into a well made play bristling with
confidence. Susan's friend Ian becomes
Ian's teacher, and the plot compensates for
the missed the chain of coincidence to a
ridiculous length, the same judge however

Oedipus at Colonus by Robert George
 Adapted by Rob George

It is interesting that Rob George wrote a rock musical called *Luffy* which had a low budget presentation at Her Majesty's Theatre and now Adelaide's very own Opera Theatre. Many are saying after the demise of the enterprising *Neil Kelly* that local *Luffy* wasn't too bad after all. Mr George must start more from a dreadful fate of TV commentators and critical scorn.

Director Malcolm Haylock, as co-director of the Circle Theatre Co., which crumpled with *Luffy*'s poor reception and poor box office, is now active amongst the local theatre groups. Lately he directed a production of Brecht's *Happy End* at the Meridian again. A great city has gone up amongst the theatre lovers of Adelaide because the university which used to be a cheap source of seats, namely the Little Theatre and the Union Theatre, have upped the hire charges, taking them out of the question for amateur groups. In reply to the lack of economic performing areas and the need for a good dancing space the Australian Theatre Theatre and the Association of Community Theatres have converted an ex-hallroom, ex-ballet theatre into what is now the Balmain Theatre. Unusual in design and exciting in possibilities it is to be opened on the 24th of February and thereafter to be danced on by interstate groups during the Festival of Arts.

And Adelaide guides her the way to innovation. Every second year everyone is mad with what they're seen, what they should have seen and what they are about to see. Had the Festival time when the state sequels to gifts.

Classically uplifting and can be theatrically flamboyant.

TONY BAKER

Oedipus at Colonus by Robert George
 Adapted by John Lewis South
 Australian Theatre Co. The Playhouse,
 Adelaide S.A. Opened 25 February, 1974
 Director, **Rob George**; Costume, mask
 design, **Tanya Malsam-Wilchik**; set design,
Richard Roberts.

Oedipus, **Gavin Glenn**; *Philo*, **Messenger**,
Antigone, **Ruth Bancroft**; *Creon*, **John
 Gaden**; *Teiresias*, **Man from Corinth**, **James
 Edwin Hodgkinson**; *Ismene*, **Polynice**,
Men of Colonus, **Messenger**, **Ronald Pells**,
Old Shepherd, *Thersites*, **Kate Wilby**; *Chorus*,
Leslie, **Brian Jensen**; *Chorus*, **Judy Davis**,
Gaila Pines, **Michael Fuller**, **Mal
 Gilman**, **Wayne Jervis**, **Chris Mahoney**,
Tony Prohn, **Peter Schwann**, **Michael
 Alberry**, **Paul Benkalla**, **Nicholas
 Magner**.



Oedipus thoughtfully contemplating the Sphinx whose riddle he was able to answer.
 From a 15th century style

Apart from being a complex play, *Oedipus* is a good choice as a festival production. After all this drama, or rather dramas, were written for the Dionysian festivals two and a half thousand years ago. Then how better for the State company to mark the latest arts festival in the Athens of the South?

Oedipus the King and *Oedipus at Colonus*, which the South Australian Theatre Company presents in one evening as just under three hours each an interval, are also classically uplifting and can be theatrically flamboyant, the very stuff of festivals.

The SATC in its Playhouse home brought out the big guns for the occasion. Director Colin Gedge and designer Tanya Malsam-Wilchik, working very much in tandem with the production, behind the scenes with Denis Glenn and Edna Hodgkinson leading the on stage.

The reception follows classic convention with the scenes masked, wearing phyllos and looking, such are the vagaries of fashion, in this quite modest making largely stylised pictures and not making the women's parts (Ismene and Philonice) too heart, there are female actors in the chorus.

In these circumstances the choice of Glenn and Oedipus on his long, tragic and pathetic journey is an especially good one. With the character masked, voice taken on an added importance and the Glenn voice, based on the work of conventional playwrights and polished on Gilbert and Sullivan, is an expressive and powerful instrument heard here in very good effect.

But in such circumstances, too, the production stands or falls on the designer and director. Miss Malsam-Wilchik is celebrated for her work with Sir Tyrone Guthrie and later with the Royal Shakespeare and the National in London.

The concept for the SATC follows through her pioneering work there. The set is minimal and austere, such artifice as there are symbolic and the masks are powerful, even elemental, to provide a proper use among an audience watching men caught up in their destiny, creatures of the gods but archetypal themselves.

While the total design is obviously the work of one hand there are differences in the two halves of the evening. The tragic, and to my mind more successful, *Oedipus the King* is dark in colour and sensitive in tone quite startlingly so for those accus-

used to think of the attic world as a place of light and purity among the olive groves. This *Thebes* may be a place of kings and gods and fate. It is also a place of tribal savagery.

Oedipus at Colonus where the pathetic self-blinded old man finally reaches his mysterious end is lighter in look and feel. The chorus masks have a more informal, human look. They also have a byzantine look which I must found occasionally jarring.

Some of the effects used had been seen in the company's *Macbeth* some months back, masks and red streamers for blood, for instance, together with movement techniques. Then it was disappointing. Here it was much more successful.

Mention of movement provides an opportunity for mention of Michael Fuller. His work has previously been well worth watching. For this production it is a delight. The difficult chorus is handled very well and while both plays have as times a balletic quality it is not at the expense of the words.

There is not the space here for a further analysis of Sophocles, his world and that of *Oedipus* but the elements highlighted in Mr George's interpretation are those of hubris, the overweening pride the gods find so miserable and sometimes confounding reason (to the modern mind anyway) of disaster by chance, of destiny and of the virtues of living by the law.

Although in such a production the actors' place is secondary particular mention should be, besides Glenn and Hodgkinson, of Ronald Pells who on opening night in another, later classic tradition overcame an attack of mumps to appear and to perform successfully with as locusts and Polyneus and of Brian James as chorus leader. Mention, too, is an unhappy way of Karen Miles as the old shepherd in *Oedipus the King*. He enters with a kind of bowlegged stance which is irrelevant to the play and which he has affected too often in his SATC roles.

There are, then, faults in this evening's theatre. But it is theatre in the traditional sense, the clash of symbols and light and dark, unique experience. It enters the imaginative and the emotions, no-one could regard this entertainment as less than or inferior of cinema and television. Theatre has and strong, that is what festivals are all about.

Intellectual diversion or sketches preciously treated?

by ROBERT PAGE

ROBERT PAGE

National Theatre, Downtown, Sydney NSW
Opened 18 February, 1978

There is an air of preciosity at the National Downtown present offering. The three plays range from a tribute to the Marx Brothers comedy team — not the political propaganda — through a playlet of western divertimento, to a 'Spaghetti-western' (yes, it's stretching, or 1,700 inserted aphorisms without stage directions or arrangement of speaking parts; from Marlon to mania of you like).

The first two pieces by Hans Hupfand are both delicious — especially for the actors — and fully accessible, almost to the point of being pedestrian as *Playlet*. One is a series of classic points and routines culminating in a love affair between Groucho and a cello with all the innuendo that string-bach and carveries line following afford. The ingenious portrayal of Marjoe, later metamorphosing into Chico, by outfit Pierre Emery was treated first with endearing pathos; that astonishment when he turned to his real work as musician—even playing the cumbersome westman classical guitar better. With Groucho almost a parody of himself as impersonation makes laughs, but John McTernan gave nothing short of a repudiation, with all the incompetent authority, sentimental one and mostly, argued girls fully studied.

Stable is not much more than a sketch with Jennifer McGregor putting her fine voice to the service of a woman's primping and prancing before the prospect for the night out. She pinks and taps her way through the facial and bodily hair-to-voal accompaniment—eyebrows, nose-tissue, armpits, nipples and pubes, then does a burr coat (not?) and off she goes right. A *Spaghetti-western* is added by the nearly column including an enormous mathematical matrix presumably symbolising the conservatism of the male.

My concern about these two plays is that despite their author receiving the Krausheimer Prize of 1974, they are really the stuff of Mighty Pythons, an university joke, given some false respect-



Jennifer McGregor in Peter's *Stable*. Photo: Robert McFarlane.

ability and artifice by their musical requirements, viz, a cello for the first a soprano for the second.

'Don't put an empty head on an intelligent pillow' is one of the myriad of aphorisms whispered, sung, barked, read, typed and barked at the audience through Krausheimer's *Stableman*. John Bell's direction, at with the last two shorts, has coloured the cast with a tremendous assurance and delivery but in some respect to my mind has gone against the intention of the text. All it is is 1,300 sentences devoid of plot, situation, character, etc. but it is these which Bell constantly and variously attempts to re-impose on the script. If the piece is as he sees it 'a legitimate challenge to what constitutes our idea of 'drama' " then falling back on writers' impressionism, beginning with the well worn Marxist game factors among each other's movements, through history's chop quarter tappings, through market research interviews, through teacher and pupil relationships and so on, seems rather to duck the issue as a way, up, that one can't with Beckett's *Play* (1964) where three actors are stuck in time to deliver three broken monologues. There a story emerges forward. Here the cascade of mock truths can only point up the absurdity of man trying verbally to categorise his experience. The show's cynicism had to make memory. I doubt if the whole somewhat leaves the doubts but one couldn't dismiss the feeling of that being a trip back into the urban, even the poster derives from early 60's pop art and to have gained *Stable* through lost money and that sense of 'profound mystification' in the aging process. Hupfand's intention in *Offending the Audience* (1968) and *Self-accusation* (1969) questioned theatre and self development respectively in a much more cosmic fashion. Indeed both the playwrights owe much to the German tradition—one is of Annette birth, the other just back from a three year sojourn there—and wholly indebted to its critical approach, issued upon I've read after that was missed out on the Renaissance which swept the rest of Europe. Full credit to the performers, Nicholas Kargis (voluntarily back), Annette McGregor and John McTernan again, and Anne Welch had finally rather an evening of sketches treated preciously than the intellectual dynamism expected.

The ingredients are pre-packed, the recipe is simple. . .

by NORMAN KESSLE

NORMAN KESSLE

Eight Pies, A Year Ago, a musical tribute devoted by Libby Morris, Marjoe Street Theatre opened in February, 1978. Director: **Alastair Duncan**, designer: **Michael O'Brien** (photography), **Lella Little** (musical direction), **Graig Scott** (new English lyrics by **Frank Landmann**, **Rosalee Bridges** and **Peter Reeves** additional material by **Alastair Duncan**, musical arrangements by **Chuck Mallett**, **Rosalee Bridges** and **Peter Reeves**.

With **Bunny Gibson**, **Doug Ringman**, **Marjoe Street**, **Red Barker**.

There are obvious reasons for the contrasting style of *pre-packed* materials based on the work of single composers or performers. The ingredients are pre-packed, the recipe is simple and the mixture fairly convenient to prepare and to serve.

So far we have imported such variable concoctions as Cole Gwynne's *Centred Territory*, *Territorial* and *Sale By Sale* by Southview. Melbourne even enjoyed one taste home-cooked sample, but the local chefs over-looked a vital preservative called copyright and the dish went sour!

In Sydney, so far, the best offerings have been at the enterprising Marjoe Street Theatre always well presented with carefully selected trimmings. Recently earning well-deserved kudos and laurels, Marjoe of Alastair Duncan opened his 1978 season with a pleasant sample of the genre — *Eight Pies, A Year Ago*, a collection of the little known or best-loved songs with a light dressing of narrative verse.

This was a truly tasty attempt to tempt meat palates, but it was worried to its failure, I feel, only by the conservatism, the dedicated Paul fan. As one of the latter, I played a small part in promoting this nostalgic feast. Writing of Bunny Gibson's performance in *Love Is Down* at this theatre, I compared her voice to that of Paul Alastair Duncan then told her, in roughly these words: "One day there'll be a show about Paul. If we can get it you'll play in it." Well, Canadian born actress Libby Morris eventually came good with the show. Alastair got the rights and Bunny is there, as promised.

This show is different to its predecessors in that there are no disclaimed ingredients and no one speaks as Paul. It is left entirely to the descriptive nature of the songs plus commendably short narratives taken drawn from the biography written by Edith's half sister and lifelong companion, Susan Bernath (29th April, London, 1930) to sketch as respectfully her birth in a Paris street in 1915, her upbringing in a brother,

her success as a singer, her parade of lovers, her addiction to alcohol and drugs, her tragic end in 1963).

The thirty-three songs in the show were shared between the four performers—Barry Gibson, Maureen Elinor, Doug Kingman and Ned Kelly. The women were magnificent, the men a mistake. This was no discredit to them, both skilled and proven performers. It was simply that trying to balance the sexes to please mixed audiences did not work. They faced an impossible task: making songs written solely for so-called male stars as songs as Paul Kingman scored best with personalized versions of "Catherine" and "The Lovers", but Danbar, though by song and discord well in the concert numbers was quite bad in his solo efforts at describing the Ned Kelly style.

It probably would have been too much for the two women to sustain the whole show alone—Maureen Elinor's voice was beginning to show strain at the end of the night I was there—but four women would have been better, and if two of them were to handle only the less distinctive songs.

Barry Gibson had most of the better-known numbers—"La Vie En Rose", "The Americanists", "Majord", "Amsterdam", "Les Héros Blancs" and "La Vie Regrette Rose"—but Maureen Elinor had a show stopper in "The Right to Love" and scored also with "Moe Legitimate", "I Don't Care", "Moe Drea" and "On de Cœur".

A special program was to hear many of the songs sung in English for the first time, with excellent new translations by Frank Landerman, Ronnie Bridges and Peter Kavan.

I was disappointed in the women's dressing—sublimating modern frocks in pastel pink and blue respectively, with assorted related scarves by variety. In the second half, at least, they should have been in black, which Ned inevitably insisted on wearing when performing.

Direction by Alanbar Duncan responsible for some additional material, was well served by Keith Little's choreography and excellent musical backing directed by bass player Craig Scott.

Michael O'Keefe, from the Old Tote Company, provided a mostly acceptable act using standard but effective back projection.

Ned Kelly, Mick Turkin, Aaron Sheerin, Jeremy Peaty, Joe Byrne, Doug Parkinman, Superintendent Hans Arthur Dignam, Ma Kelly, Geraldine Tynan, Mr Turkin, Timothy Green, Eric Beverley Evans, Steve Hart, Ma Harbort, Les Kelly, Stephen Thomas, Graham Leonard, Paul Smyth.



When Ned Kelly appeared in Adelaide, Shirley Duggan of the *Adelaide Advertiser* gave vote to one of the most vicious attacks on a show that has been seen for some time. Her main dislikes of the piece were that it cost a lot of money, that it used a lot of technical tricks, that it had little publicity, that it was "vulgar" and "preposterous" and that the show was marred with loving care!

Mr Duggan's complaints seem, then, to be that Ned Kelly was a big theatrical show, the very grounds on which I found it a reasonably enjoyable production.

Certainly the money spent showed in the sets and technical effects, the visual and musical aspects of the opera are its greatest strengths. Even from the striking board with Ned Kelly's words in English lack high letters, that acts as curtain before the opening, and the show, which start on Spencer Street Station where curiously controlled dry air filters the dimensional red and green platform lights in Superintendent Hans (Arthur Dignam) collect his police force to start the journey to Glenrowan, the atmosphere is built by the sets. The superimposed wooden structures at the side of the stage readily support the identity of police station, hotel, bank, pub, prison and finally gallows.

The backdrop made entirely of hurricane lanterns was certainly an "effect" without much more relevance, but as a background to a solo from the epitaphs Ned it was a star performance in its own right. Other staging techniques, though, were partly theatrical and far removed from indulgent expense. The use of cloth throughout was strikingly effective, as

when Joe Sheerin has best friend, the traitor Aaron Sheerin, and rather than take blood he pulls from Aaron's stomach a long ball of red gauze. Likewise Ma Kelly's long of working, squares and triangles of cloth traversing the stage, made the contrast of lightness, warmth and brokenness to the dark opportunities of so much else in the Kelly lives. Finally the Glenrowan fire, with glowing sheets of flame-colored cloth walked between people, blown about and pulled up the back of the stage in increasing fury—and then switched abruptly to black, from behind which, Ned, in armor for the first and last time—was a most memorable image of elemental destruction, culminating in other lanterns.

Patrick Byrne's music may indeed pull a little from everywhere to make its whole, but it is a coherent and cohesive body of work of much greater depth than mere sing-along rhythm. The Glenrowan ("Ellie") lyrics are at times moving and always affirming, but then they tend to be for there is no dialogue, nor even much in the way of linking passages between the songs.

If the opera lacks a centre it is because of the major singers, Geraldine Tynan as Ma Kelly and Arthur Dignam as Superintendent Hans both turn in excellent performances, vocally and characteristically and it is unfortunate that they should in both respects surpass Mick Turkin as Ned. It seems odd that someone with a more powerful, even aggressive, stage presence should not have been cast like Jon English as an original mood for Mick Jagger in the film of the same name. Mr Turkin pulls over a basically agreeable personality, but scarcely one to sustain the anger, sad, bitter and finally restless facets of the character though this is not to ignore the outstanding effort he brings to it.

If there is any theme taken up, extraneous to the basic facts of the story, it is a rather anomalous line on religion. After his first murder Ned sings that he cannot return home as "Avar that the door", which refrain occurs several times, but the song of his finale, a post mortem appearance, outlines the sentiment that people like Ned help us live in a world where we know there's no heaven in the sky—but is sung in a Salvation Army—

In these days of stringency it is a matter of habit to cringe at such words as "extraneous" and "extravagant", but a rock opera is an expensive, showy medium and only so careful as such. That the Kelly gang should appear in a mirror-ball balloon that is never seen again, and Ned's armor should be used solely by the Glenrowan stage is entirely suitable. Chorus live, though sparer to the eye apparently cost much more, and one wonders whether, had this been so important, the period response in Adelaide would not have been wholly different. Can't we ever applied our own, and recognize that Reg Livermore is little short of a theatrical dynamo who might all too easily be lost to the international circuit? I congratulate the Festival Centre Trust too for daring as much. Let them not be deterred from more ventures of this kind.

The backdrop... was a star performance in its own right

LUCY WAGNER

Ned Kelly written, created and designed by Reg Livermore; music by Patrick Byrne. Adelaide Festival Centre Trust and First Dore in association with the Australian Entertainment Theatre Trust. Her Majesty's Theatre, Spirey, NSW. Opened 4 February 1976. Musical directors and arrangements, Michael Caruso; Choreography, Keith Bell.

Successes and distresses

ROBERT PAGE

The Club — National and Theatre Royal

Prosper of Second Avenue — Ensemble

Treadwell — Ensemble at the Writers

Rocky — National Upstairs

The Cat and the Canary — Old Tote, Drama Theatre

Thames

The Dreamer — Old Tote, Drama Theatre

Miss Julie/Black Comedy Old Tote Drama Theatre

Well, let's not get carried away. Just as I was despairing at the sight of this new Olympian along comes *John Julie and Black Comedy* on a double bill. The first didn't quite knock up the herd, blood up passion of a Scandinavian Melanconer's Eve (despite Strindberg's line I think Julie should have flushed not paled) though the sheer concentration and presence of Robert Morris, the anonymous Julie, brought all to rights. Of the second, the nine-times marvelled while the twines disintegrated it as a silly, but Shaffer's play is a brilliant force which I have never seen fail. The major idea, from a famous Chinese play, is to leave the lights on when they should be off and off when on so we see Barry Otto and the rest of the cast grapping around in blaring light, and apparently moving normally in total darkness, and confusion builds frenetically from there.

The only grounds for *Black Comedy* being part of the supposed classic season seem to be that it was once coupled with *Miss Julie* at England's National Theatre. That was twelve years ago. I thought we were only eighteen months behind. But then the whole season is based on the National experience which shows that the open strings are still as strongly held now as ever. A sad situation, but nonetheless better and more effective than usual: rest of the two plays in question prove vintage facilities.

Hiring had just found up in our last issue, John Bell's careful and stylish production of *The Club* mixed with Williamson, unquestionably Australia's most successful playwright has scored again and had his ball in the net before the nets even turned up, with a transfer arranged before rehearsal began, theatre boardrooms are becoming as concerned as to where they stand in the audience stakes and financial league every bit as much as their Australian Robin counterparts. Well made, unashamedly commercial packaging in the direction and, bar quips as to why Ron Haddrick overcomes being "smashed" too easily for audience, a sharp pace with, to my mind, a disturbing loss of attack in low sitcom, it overflows, people can quickly find they have outlived their usefulness and be removed by smooth-tongued administrators, who these days seem to be the new ruling class.

Williamson's American cow starpoint Ned Simon is also achieving high marks on the audience ratings of the tiny Ensemble.

Again, though more so, the comedy has an black side with the bare of *Prosper of Second Avenue* moving quickly through misanthropy and breakdown to reconciliation as the sitcom, rack pointed living, setting pathos stuffing, aspects of misanthropy left become all too much. Brian Young is brilliant as the Prosper taking all the movie reality in the state of a well-mannered actor, the wife, (Jane Hibel) who repeats the process, appears slighter at first but develops through acrobatic as the evening progresses.

Far less can be said of the Lorna, Bol's *Treadwell* at the Ensemble, newly acquired Shaffer Theatre. Written, directed and acted by women it should have been an exciting venture but largely suffered from portraying boredom homely.

Splendid actor performances abound in *Tan Goodman's Rock* (at Nimrod), but it has proved, I believe in Melbourne too where it had a simultaneous run off, to be a landmark flight not only of a washed up bourgeois from the straits but theatrically too. At the Playwright's Conference where at least a few flights were suggested by the mind's eye, given them, there is little by the mind to do except attempt recognition of the thousands of 60's song lyrics which bedevils the text. Two points, one it was that decade's life style and sub-cultural solidarity which — despite "American Pie" — did, not the music, two actors even to top-flight as Robin Ramsay, Jack Weaver, Kris McQuade and Tony Llewelyn Jones can't without music at the least, have any of the presence of even the poorest pop group — a presence which the play constantly reaches for but never grasps. It could have been saved somewhat by recourse to a very large flat pencil and pair of scissors.

The Cat and the Canary has far less of the longevity but even less power, being everything one expects from the old comedy thriller. It has the polish which the Tote can often bestow, but the surface scarcely covers the disturbing clash of styles which look like a belk such way (straight thriller/farce) by director Collingwood. The state companies were to "peruse excellence" according to Australia Council funding policy, but surely the quality was supposed to go more than their skin deep.

It appears the optimism of yesterday's men thinking for the more appeal and as such an endorsement of the artistic policy, of the company. Nobody is about the right to fail, not for nearly a million dollars a year) to succeed like this. It will of course pack them in, it will get around the middle three traps.

Will the tempest blowing around the Tote abate? Looking at its other offering in the Drama Theatre, I just not. It seemed more than symbolic sitting there as the thunder rolled across the oppressive Drama Theatre ceiling, thinking it must come in, and the Tote with it, at any moment. The art was a union emergency (and one job, held in all too obvious flat at Father for Miranda and Ferdinand's chess game, ambiguous circle at control) trying in a hopeless baroque fashion to cover the supposition of, in my view, hopeless

misdirection. A camp clad-hepping portrayal of Ariel, a Caliban who went more to Rost than Shakespeare, and a Prospero a long way from the range and vocal prowess the part demands — not much Will Power here. Like poor Prospero all that seems left for the Tote at the moment is to "be relay'd by props", which frees all hands. Again is a tugging success. "Look on my works, . . . and despair" Nothing remains of that colossal work. . .

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A Happy and Holy Occasion

Help! I'm

ALL started as supper friends

Miss Sine: That was a very startling supper, Mrs. O'Mahon. It does you credit. The luncheon was a delight. I always say one cannot have a social evening without luncheon.

Mary: Thank you, Miss Sine. I'm pleased you liked them.

Miss Sine: I did. Well! Now that the supper was a refreshment and replenished what is the next thing in the agenda?

Mary: Would you like to see Christy in his costume?

Miss Sine: Well, I wasn't going to suggest that.

Mary: He looks beautiful in it.

Miss Sine: Perhaps he does. But, then again, in the costume altogether suitable?

George: Mary, I don't think it is the most suitable time. It's... it's not a fancy dress party.

Mary: Fancy dress party? What are you talking about? It's his costume! What do you think, Father?

O'Garra: Well... Well? What does Christy think?

Mary: Christy?

Christy: Yes, Miss. No. I don't want to put the costume on. Anyway it's packed away. All the pieces will go out of place.

Mary: So your grandfather's not going to see you in your costume before you leave.

Miss Sine: I was going to suggest that at this stage of the evening's luncheon. How can "Shamus O'Brien"?

Mary: Oh, for God's sake, no! It isn't all right! Let's have some singing. Let's hear Father. Thee! I want to hear him. He's got a beautiful voice. Haven't you, Father?

O'Garra: Well, I'll praise it no other way, Mary.

Miss Sine: For myself I'd prefer to hear "Shamus O'Brien".

Mary: Later! Later! When I'm doing the dishes I won't have to listen to it. I've heard it all my life.

Miss Sine: Well, if you must. It is your evening.

Mary: Thanks, I do indeed.

George: Perhaps it might be better to hear Shamus first.

Thomas: For myself I'd like to hear in House. I don't like doing a singing job in "Shamus".

Miss Sine: No, no. Thank you. Mr. O'Mahon. Thank you, Thomas. I can wait. Let Mrs. O'Mahon have her own way.

Thomas: Shamus O'Brien is very relaxing.

Mary: And so is Father O'Garra. Listening to him will relax us all. You know I think he's got a better voice than Bing Crosby.

O'Garra: You can't compare me to the young Bing. Anyway he's a crooner.

Houssin-Crozier: That's some awful raggs about today. The Andrew Sisters? Up! They really make me pink! And frankly I don't go for the Bing Crosby fellow much, either. I prefer he's having a bad effect on the younger generation. All these baby-boomers and their turned loose. Now the singer I like is Richard Crooks. Good strong stuff!

Thomas: He's got wars on his hands.

Houssin-Crozier: What? Richard Crooks?

Thomas: No. Bing Crosby. That's why he sings the way he does. It's an affliction.

Houssin-Crozier: It is affliction listening to him.

Miss Sine: He's a very good Catholic.

Houssin-Crozier: What? Bing Crosby a Catholic?

Miss Sine: (singing) Mass and holy communion every Sunday. Family rosary every night. I read in *The Annals of Our Lady of the Fatima*.

Houssin-Crozier: (singing) Well! I never! Fancy that! Go on! Bing Crosby a Catholic? I'll have to listen to him a little more carefully.

George: What else would he be with a name like Crosby?

Miss Sine: It doesn't always follow. Only last week I saw at the funeral service in the *St. Andrew's Mission*. Recall when an O'Garra was buried in the Presbyterian section of Sandpiper Cemetery.

Thomas: What's nothing? I saw something worse a couple of months ago as O'Garra was cremated at Bonfield Crematorium.

Miss Sine: (singing) We can only pray for them.

Mary: Father, will you sing now?

Houssin-Crozier: The Holy City? Father.

O'Garra: I couldn't manage it, Houssin. It's too high for me.

Houssin-Crozier: It's a good song. Richard Crooks really handles it well.

Mary: (singing) Jerusalem, Jerusalem. Lift up your gates and sing.

O'Garra: (singing) Jerusalem in the highest, Jerusalem to your king.

Houssin-Crozier: (singing) Jerusalem in the high.

Mary: (singing) My God! It is high! I'm so Richard Crooks. Get me a drink, George.

Miss Sine: I don't know why you care so about Richard Crooks, Houssin, when our own Count John McCormack has such a glorious voice. Now that's a singer for you. The Ray from Arklow! The chance, without vacuum the world.

Houssin-Crozier: You're right, Miss Sine. A glorious voice. I remember him in Arklow in 1917 when he was on his Australian tour. He gave a marvelous performance. And as chairman of the Arklow modern school up and sang "God Save the King" as him!

O'Garra: (singing) "God Save the King" as him? What did they do then for?

Houssin-Crozier: Because he had become an American citizen. They let him know they didn't approve.

Miss Sine: Well, Sydney missed him a little more, perhaps. I well remember seeing him in the Sydney Town Hall. Such a magnificent person. Such grace. He just stood on the stage and liquid gold poured from his mouth. His voice floated on his breath. I'll never forget him singing "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms".

Mary: That's it! That's the song. "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms". I have the music here. Father can sing it. It's just the song. It's just the song.

Miss Sine: I don't think it's the type of song Father would wish to sing.

Mary: Why not? What's wrong with it? It's a beautiful song.

Miss Sine: It's not exactly the most suitable song for a priest to sing.

Mary: Well, what do you want him to sing? "The Queen of Heaven"?

Miss Sine: That would be more suitable.

Mary: Come, Father. Let's hear you sing "Believe Me".

O'Garra: I could sing "The Mountains of Mourne".

Mary: After you've sung "Believe Me".

George: (singing) Mary, are you sure you can handle it?

Mary: Of course I can. Look! The man used to

Mary: All right. *Whisper to go.* Will you come with me?

Broder: Christ, no! The excitement would kill me. I'll go out into the kitchen and be getting on with the dishes.

Mary: You do! Oh, thank you, thank you.

Broder leaves. Mary returns to the piano. She looks nervously determined to play. She then goes across and paces herself a while. She stops at showing her skill in the operation. She returns to the piano and plays some notes mechanically. Her eyes close. Mary, it seems that he is in the room and soon.

Tuckey: *Amusing murmurs.* Don't let me distract you. I just came in for a drop of whiskey. Father O'Garman's keeping the other boys in to himself. I suppose he's trying to lubricate the vocal chords. He is due to sing again in a few minutes. Heavens, his newly landed *Shamus O'Brien*. And then Denary's going to tell his little joke. It's a wonderful little concert we're having on the floor veranda. No arguments. I haven't enjoyed myself so much for such a long time. My father has so long without music. Still, he'll manage. He did earlier. It's a real song, really, little concert we're having.

Mary: Get out!

Tuckey: I see you're having a private little concert all by yourself!

Mary: Get out!

Tuckey: It's getting to be a habit of yours telling people to get out.

Mary: Leave me alone!

Tuckey: It's a pity in a way that Father has to sing without any musical accompaniment. I suppose we could move the piano onto the floor veranda. But, then again, I don't suppose you'd let anyone touch your precious piano.

He deliberately puts his glass on top of the piano.

Mary: Get your glass off my piano or I'll throw it in your face!

Tuckey: *Looking glass away.* Easy now. Easy Temper! *Temper!* Ah, you're sure a high and mighty one. You do give yourself airs and graces. Anyone would think you were a great concert pianist or something. You can't play the piano! Father O'Garman makes your fingers go all bumpy, doesn't he?

Mary: Would you please go? You're making me sick.

Tuckey: *Amusing.* Your piano! You know, earlier tonight, Denary came begging to me for \$5 to help with Christy. I told him last minute would come to an end he sold his piano.

Mary: It's not his to sell!

Tuckey: That's what he said and I told him he was a fool.

Mary: It's my piano.

Tuckey: I suppose selling it wouldn't do any good. It would be wasted on Christy.

Mary: Why do you make?

Tuckey: I don't think he'd make a thing.

Tuckey: Because he's got you for a mother?

Mary: What's wrong with me?

Tuckey: When I stood next to Denary in his first

show when he married you, I didn't think that he would have the gall to mouth love to me to be.

Mary: *Amusingly.* Seven months later! Christy was premature.

Tuckey: Premature? Premature! Robust! You all say that! There's no such thing! It's just an error.

Mary: He was premature. He weighed only three pounds. Ask Deney.

Tuckey: He was too ashamed to talk about it. He knew why I refused to be Christy's godfather. All I said to him was, "The woman tempted you and you fell!" He couldn't look me in the eye. He just turned away in shame.

Mary: Did he ask you to be Christy's godfather?

Tuckey: Of course. Who else would he ask?

Mary: I told him not to ask you. And he did.

Tuckey: And I refused.

Mary: I said to Deney, "I don't want that little slug, Korking, to be godfather." And off he goes and asks you and all he got is a sermon. Well, so here's what's just into you all these years.

Tuckey: Deney and me were good friends until you came along. And he was a good living man too.

Mary: Oh my God! You're proud?

Tuckey: Watch what you say. You're the last one to start prying off as other people.

Mary: Get out! I feel like vomiting on you.

Tuckey: Lovely! Lovely! That's a nice way for a lady to talk.

Mary: Get out or you'll hear worse in a minute.

Tuckey: No doubt, you could say worse too. You're just that type. I've always thought so.

Mary: Get it buggery out of here!

Tuckey: What did I tell you? You'd think better wouldn't do it in five months. But I know! I know! I've got you worried up.

He deliberately puts his glass on the piano.

Mary: Get that glass off my piano! Get that glass off my piano!

He takes the glass off the piano. In the ensuing struggle Mary upbraids over Tuckey.

Mary: Get your filthy hands off me, you dirty bopper!

They come struggling. Complaints of each being overpowered.

Tuckey: What did you say?

Mary: You heard.

Tuckey: You're making me a fool tonight, eh? You deserve to be beaten! You're a dirty scoundrel.

Broder: *Amusing.* What's going on, Mary?

Mary: I told him to get his filthy hands off me.

Tuckey: So there, drink all over me and then try to hit me with the glass.

Mary: You bloody liar! It was an accident. He's been at me all night. You're a queer bastard, Korking.

Broder: You can say that again.

Tuckey: It's a wonder she's got the back to front the other side of a Sunday. With a mouth like hers. And the body bent round on a tongue like his.

Mary: He won't believe Christy was premature.

Broder: Don't worry. Mary. Some men aren't happy unless a woman's twelve months pregnant with her first child. And to be in the wife role. Then no one can say they talked the joke before marriage. It's an awful dirty business, isn't it. There's only two types of women seen in there. Tuckey? Virgins or whores. If you're a virgin, I bet you're no better.

Tuckey: I haven't said anything like that.

Broder: Women? Where you a source of inspiration, aren't we? *Amusingly.* But I bet you've got a few actual little letters of your own haven't you, Tuckey?

O'Garman: *Amusing.* on the floor, now showing effects of drink and holding upturned heads.

O'Garman: Secret letters? Who's got secret letters?

Tuckey: What do you mean?

Broder: Tuckey. He plays with himself.

Tuckey: I don't do anything of the sort.

Broder: I bet you masturbate. Of course you do. Anybody you can usually tell a man who masturbates.

Tuckey: *Amusingly.* Ah, get me with you. Drop it.

Broder: He grows like black hair in the palm of his left hand.

Tuckey: *Amusingly.* glowing at his left hand. I haven't got any.

He notices he has been caught.

O'Garman: Don't let a worry you. Tuckey old man. A few black hairs never hurt anyone. Every couple has to have his own way of making.

Tuckey: Look to yourself!

Mary: Ignoring others, *except to O'Garman.* Are you enjoying yourself?

O'Garman: *Amusingly.* slightly guilty to Mary. I sang beautifully. Beautifully. It lovely look now. I'm sorry. Top of war. Puffed here, pulled there. *Amusingly.* Never get steady.

Broder: The bottle won't.

O'Garman: Every cripple has to have his. I clunk up at the bottom every day.

Broder: Hello. It must be some New Year. How comes the end of the happy long-march crowd?

O'Garman: *Amusing.* as Miss. So come the others. *Amusingly.* *Amusingly.* Old Man. Sorry. Water here?

Miss. Miss: We've had a very interesting little concert on the floor veranda.

Broder: *Amusing.* We've had a pretty interesting little one here too.

Miss. Miss: You should have stayed, Tuckey.

Tuckey: I had to come in. The smoke and the heat from the stove was so irritating with my eyes.

Miss. Miss: You married Father tonight. The Lark in the Clear Air? He sang it beautifully. Miss O'Mahon, I'm sure you would have liked House's rendition of *Shamus O'Brien*. And now he's told his joke about the murder going to confession with great ease. And he added a very interesting touch to it tonight. Only his hands! I thought that was very funny. The joke improves with the telling. Wonderful.

Miss Blain: He treated Winton like a man. He never looked at a woman with lust in his eyes.

Tracy: Who is this fellow, Darcy?

Hansen: You'll never make an Australian, Tokyo.

Miss Blain: He was an Irish boy.

Hansen: Possessed by the Yanks.

Miss Blain: Born in Newcastle, New South Wales, married in Memphis, Tennessee.

O'Hanrahan: Rubbish! He was executed by his own countrymen in Canada!

Tracy: But what was he? What did he do?

Hansen: He was a prize fighter. The greatest ever. He would have been world champion, only the Yanks poisoned him.

Tracy: A prize fighter? A boxer? You don't usually say he should be executed?

Miss Blain: He never looked at a woman.

Broda: writhing, clenching Darcy, biting poor! Should make an interesting statue! Not to come high after having photos and all.

Tracy: A boxer. Famous name of Australia. That's the name.

Hansen: Well, at first he's a native-born Australian. More than that he's said for that French-Canadian was over there on the wall St Therese of Lisieux — the little flower of Japan.

Miss Blain: Darcy was the flower of the Western Yuletide.

Hansen: He was the flower of Australian execution. And now quite twenty-one when he died. Ah! It never forgets his funeral, the biggest the district ever saw.

Miss Blain: Ah, it was the greatest I ever attended. I'll never forget seeing his confounded body lying in the long window in East Maitland, dressed in the habit of a Carmelite monk. Slowly solemn, making direct, pecking motion in the end (head) but in cold, icy grey cold. The *Come, Sweet, welcome, Miss, Cry of 'The News'* etc. Darcy upon the column at The apartment house for the ABC News for the period is heard — *Advocate Australia, Fair* — followed by the voice of the newswoman.

Newswoman: Here is the National News from the ABC read by Elsie Hancock.

The situation in Singapore tonight appears both grim and cheerful. The BBC say: "Without thought for their own lives Allied troops are still trying desperately to stem the burning tide that threatens to submerge the island. The war is now on the outskirts of the chain between the Empire. The cruel, unmerciful fight goes on. But there is still a glimmer of hope."

At this point Christy rises and very formally and slowly, with hands on head, walks to the right side of the dark opening of the stage and takes up a position, facing left.

Newswoman: Tokyo Radio reports that Australian troops are severely beaten around the mainstay point of Pao Pungang, about seven miles from the coast of Singapore.

Recent Radio reports that Canadian are being taken to the north. "Every inch of the northern part of the city is being captured," the report says. "It is simply hell on earth. The British, Australian, Chinese and Indian troops on the

outskirts of Singapore are fighting, with inevitable casualties for death."

Bells now begin to ring. The bells keep tolling throughout the dark scenes until the assumption of the News.

Miss Blain: Death! I control them off. Poor! I control physically, and mentally and one spiritually.

She walks to the left side of the stage in the suit and capote. Christy.

Christy: The death of Thomas Oliver Keating, New Guinea, December 1942.

Tracy moves to the upper of the stage, next to Miss Blain.

Miss Blain: On the evening of June 1942 Japanese submarines shelled the city of Newcastle, Tokyo, true to the solemn vow which he had made in the O'Mahon home on the night of the marriage of February 1942, joined the Australian Army. He was posted to New Guinea.

Tracy did not fall in battle. He died from dysentery (Tracy really doesn't know). But he led a clean, wholesome life and no man is more beloved in the colour of sunset.

Miss Blain joins her child of the new Keating Trunk.

Christy: The death by drowning of Broda Malachy, Stockton Beach, January 1943.

Broda moves to the upper and stands next to Tracy.

Miss Blain: Broda Malachy was drowned on a Sunday morning in Stockton. She had not been to Mass that morning. She was carried out to sea with her lower back of when were swimming in the water. His recollection body was washed up on the beach some days later. Her's was never found.

Mary's Broda came on more to find.

Miss Blain: Darned! Darned! Darned!

O'Hanrahan: Twist the string and the ground. 'Twist the string and the ground.

Miss Blain: Darned! Darned! Darned!

O'Hanrahan: Twist the string and the ground. 'Twist the string and the ground.

Mary's Fennell Broda's Fennell, more lovely of intelligence, most generous hearted, most beautiful of women. Broda's face of the best.

Miss Blain joins her child of the burning Broda.

Christy: The death by spiritual drowning of Thelma John O'Hanrahan, Newcastle, June 1944.

O'Hanrahan walks to the upper of the stage and stands next to Broda.

Miss Blain: His was the worst death of all because he suffered mental domination. He was spiritually drowned. Before a collision had been set around his neck and he had been cast into the depths of the sea. He committed an act of adultery with a Catholic Mary O'Hanrahan remains standing. He explains the point on the chair.

Miss Blain: Darned! Darned! Darned! Before they had both been drowned in the depths of the sea.

Christy: The death by burning of my father, Doreen Patrick O'Mahon, Newcastle.

September, September 1933.

Miss Blain: He always, thought, he would outlive me. He hoped I would leave him a little something in my will. 'He who makes a greater laugh' 'He'! It was me who had the last laugh. Doreen was killed on the Farm Alley Hill of the BHP. He was wearing a chrome furnace when he was showered with molten chrome and consumed.

Christy is a sturdy metal. It shot out all over him to a great, gushing apart. When they come to bury him there was more chrome in the coffin than on it. Poor fellow! He didn't have much to live for.

Doreen who has come to the upper. Ancestry. Miss Blain, please her chair.

Christy: The death by mental burning of my mother, Mary O'Mahon, Monnet, September 1951.

Miss Blain: As Doreen's death poor Mary went mad and had to be locked away. The good man in the Catholic Hospital did the best they could with her. But the poor thing was well gone. She had always looked steadily. It's a pity she was not herself as the mother of a priest. If God gives, vacations to priests. He also gives sometimes in the number of priests. And poor, silly Mary was never truly called, except to the madhouse.

Mary's walking towards the upper, searching for her father, God the Father. God the Son, blessing her moment of submission. Then God the Holy Ghost was to be a woman. God the Father! God the Son! Father! Then God the Holy Ghost is a woman! God the Holy Ghost is a woman!

(She reaches the upper, next to Doreen.)

I want to have a baby! I want to have a special baby. I want to have the baby Jesus! God the Holy Ghost is a woman, a woman, a woman, a woman, a woman, a woman, a woman, a woman. Mary explains the place on the chair. She remains standing.

Christy: The death by cardiac arrest of my grandfather, Vincent de Paul O'Hanrahan, Newcastle, March 1978.

Mary moves to the upper. Miss Blain, now walk up, in gown and robe, approaches her.

Miss Blain: Vincent was eighty-three years of age when he died in March 1978. He died from a heart attack in the toilet bar of a certain Newcastle Hotel after being told a wild story. He died laughing. He died laughing (writing) the benefits of the sacraments.

Mary's death. Miss Blain bows the point on the chair.

Christy: The death of Erolina Clara McMahon of mixed races, Newcastle, December 1978.

Miss Blain moves to her place in the line, next to Hansen. She looks with great difficulty.

Christy: Miss Blain died nine months after my grandfather. She was nearly one year of age. She left all her money to the Poor Men's Fathers at the Shrine of Perpetual Adoration in Chicago, for masses to be said for her soul for the next three hundred and fifty years. She left it to the Americans because they gave her the best value.

for the money.

Two women stand back have been already, telling their heads become more available. I have money upon an, now and in the hope of our death. And his head and in women.

Fade to brown-out and the continuation of the film.

Stillness in place as formerly light up.

Newsreader: However at 11 am today a dramatic message was heard coming from the jetman on Singapore over Singapore Radio after an unexpected had been down for twenty four hours. It said "We are not only going to fight — we are going to win. We shall emerge from the struggle."

Pause. Meanwhile, it was announced in Canberra this evening that the federal government had insisted total powers under the National Security Act to place any part of Australia under martial law in the event of an emergency.

Mr Finch the Minister for the Army said that even had how would apply immediately to any part of Australia involved by the enemy.

Newsreader (singing up and carrying wires off). My God! Did you hear that? "Man hat law!" "If any part of Australia is involved" That doesn't sound too good!

Miss Blue: Are we going to be a model?

Newsman: Well, they're talking about a "Mama law." Today, you might be the only one concerned. We might all end up with a rifle in our hands.

Tecky: Ah. They're making a big mouthful about nothing. You heard "Singapore hasn't fallen."

Miss Blue: That's right. However, Singapore hasn't fallen. You know what they said? "We are not only going to fight, we are going to win. We shall emerge from the struggle!"

Newsman: That sounds like bloody Churchill (singing Churchill). "We are not only going to fight — we are the winners — but we are going to win." Blah Blah Blah. All right, Singapore is good as gone.

Miss Blue: That's very serious then, House?

Newsman: Dead as one. Miss Sam. Disappear. Singapore is as good as down the drain. And we're stuck on the lot. We're on our feet. Malacca Britain is no help.

Brooks: Well? John Carson asked the Amen case, for help?

Newsman: Certainly! Certainly a telephone. He was probably drunk when he got in touch with the Yanks.

O'Garman: Peter Carlton hasn't touched a drop in years. Here's to John Carson — a good Australian.

Newsman: Great. Australia all right. It was Carson and his mob who brought up the Brisbane Line. What a hypocrite of an idea. Give half Australia away without putting up a fight.

Brooks: Bullshit. However, Carson and the Labor Party had nothing to do with the Brisbane Line. It was your mob who brought that one up. However.

Newsman: Well, I suppose a deal allows for

contamination of facts. You have to make a deal somewhere.

Brooks: Check, you're things your way.

Miss Blue: Could you modernize your language, Miss Malachy? You just took the lady name in vain, to say nothing of the male word you used a moment ago.

Brooks: Bullshit. I'll modernize my language when Misses modernize his one-eyed nose.

Newsman: Well all I'm saying, come to think of it, is that the southern half's most important claim that the top half. There's only a lot of them running around up there. It's the one claim that's important. Meanwhile, for instance.

Tecky: Meanwhile? Meanwhile's a damn.

Newsman: Meanwhile might be a damn, Tecky, but it's an important damn. As far as this war's concerned, Meanwhile's synonymously a prime in fact. Look at all the heavy industries: Rylands, Lynaghts, the Corn, Steel, the steel industry, the BHP stuff. They would all die.

Miss Blue: The BHP? What would happen to my share in Hume's?

Newsman: They'll be worthless. You can paper your dairy with them.

Miss Blue: Sweet Jesus! I think you should join up, Tecky.

Newsman: We might all have to join up. Married bloody lot!

Miss Blue: Nothing would happen to you, Tecky. Sure you'd be wearing Our Lady's sweater and I would give you a St. Christopher medal and a medal of Our Lady Help of Christians.

O'Garman: And I'll give you a medal of St. Jude the patron saint of the impossible.

Tecky: But hope of the impossible. You're both very generous. I'd be wearing most medals going into hell in this room unless I have nothing out.

George: It's not a bad life, the army. No war now.

Tecky: Not you too, George.

Miss Blue: It's a great calling. A wonderful vocation.

Newsman: It will be like going on a cruise.

Tecky: Will you let me live my own life in my own way, O.K., O.K.? If Meanwhile ever gets attacked I'll consider joining up. But a hell, it's my decision and not one of his.

Newsman: That's a promise?

Tecky: You can take it as a row. But I don't think I'll ever be called on to honor it.

Miss Blue: God bless you, Tecky. If need be, I'll light a candle for you every day.

Brooks: Our Lady's Little Dagger!

Tecky: Stop posturing me. Leave me to be.

Pause.

Miss Blue: (singing up) Well, That's been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. (Crying to Mary.) Oh, Mrs. O'Malley. Could you sign me the rest of the house?

She departs with Mary.

O'Garman: She's gone to light a candle for you, Tecky.

Newsman: (singing power and nothing off)

O'Garman: (singing drunkenly on Brooks) In Newcastle's last day, where the girls are so

poor, I like to see my eyes on sweet Brenda Malachy. Brenda! Brenda!

Brooks: That's the darling, you're singing poor!

O'Garman: Brooks! I have something serious to say to you. I want to kiss you. (Loudly.)

Brooks: Good! You are good!

O'Garman: You must let me hear your confession.

Brooks: (singing) I'll kiss you up all right. I have to marry into no wedding.

O'Garman: I already marry up all night for you, Brooks.

Brooks: I feel you would marry me too — all night. (Brooks can I tell you a secret?)

O'Garman: (to Brooks) No.

Brooks: That is, I've never slept with a priest.

O'Garman: (Brooks can see your body I'm interested in it's your soul)

Brooks: Is there any difference in a woman's body and her soul?

O'Garman: I'll have you to be watched into eternity without the benefit of the sacrament.

Brooks: (singing) If you ever hear of me being watched into eternity, think of the old saying: "Tuck the stumpy and the ground, the old stumpy caught and found."

O'Garman: (Tuck the stumpy and the ground. It doesn't give you much time, Brooks)

Brooks: It's so clumsy of time. It's all I'll need. (There gaze at each other in amiable silence.) Watch the whisky, Tecky.

O'Garman: I'm celebrating my coming of age. They say a Catholic priest should never touch whisky until he's forty. I've just turned forty.

Brooks: Well, which is it? A bad sign for a man. (Familiarity with it makes Christy)

George: I think it's going to rain. (His wife) Brooks comes to Christy.

Christy: Hello, Brooks.

Brooks: Hello, Christy love. How I wish I had something for you. Don't let Tecky see it. He'll have a heart attack.

She leaves Christy a pair of noisy heels.

Christy: (singing) Brooks! Thanks! Brooks! I didn't think.

Brooks: I know. You couldn't say anything. (She

Ernie Miles as Father O'Garman in *A Hope and Holy Ocean* by John O'Donoghue

Photop after David Wilson



needs? You didn't expect that, did you?

Christy: No, I didn't.

Brooks: You'll have to get them himself.

Christy: I'll get Father Thorne to look them

Brooks: Thore better not. I don't think Thore can tell one hand from the other.

Christy: They're beautiful birds. They're real friends.

Brooks: They're Irish here. (She laughs.) Irish here? (She sees Christy's look and smiles that she sees the play on her face.) Ah. Little boy knows more than his prayers. Irish here. Ah, wait!

Brooks has made him blush. (He begins to laugh.) Ah, that's better. Ah, my little boy. My innocent little boy. I spend all my life figuring ways to keep having faith but I'd love you for my son.

Denny enters from the veranda.

Denny: Brooks. I think it's time we all had goodnight to Christy. He's got a big day ahead of him.

Christy: Thanks, Brooks. Thanks for everything, the goodnight and the Irish here.

Brooks: Let's drink a night cap to Christy. And for a little politics also.

D'Sherman: Politics? What are you so about now?

Brooks: If he's old enough to begin his studies for the priesthood, he's old enough to begin his study of politics.

D'Sherman: For God's sake, let the lad be. Let him off to bed.

Brooks: We haven't drunk in him yet. Miss Sam returns.

Brooks: Let Christy go? (She is to leave.)

Denny: Brooks, Miss Sam has returned. I think we should all say goodnight to Christy with a drink and a prayer.

Brooks: (to Christy) Goodnight, love. Help your dad with the drink.

Brooks: I only wanted to be longer in his car. To get him right politics was. We need the drink to see an example in politics. It should worry you, Father. The way things are going. Socialism is dead. A great Catholic. Lyons is dead. And he had to cross the floor of the House. What have we got in the Labor Party? Christ?

Miss Sam: Hain's declared a church door in years.

Brooks: Christy?

Miss Sam: The same. Hain's declared a church door in years.

Brooks: Both had Catholics. No wonder the Labor Party is riddled with left wing claretous. Socialism, and communism? What Australia needs is a party of principles, a real Labor Party.

D'Sherman: What are you going to call your Party, the B/E/C's? — Right Wing, Roman Catholics.

Brooks: There's no sense in bringing religion openly into politics. We could call it the TLP, the True Labor Party. That sounds good. TLP.

Miss Sam: Why don't you call it the People's Labor Party?

Brooks: PLP? Yes. That would go. I suppose you can get a lot of candidates.

Brooks: Why don't you call it the Catholic

Party? National Party Socialism.

Brooks: (sarcastic) Catholic Socialism. National Party Socialism? That's a mouthful. How do the Catholics get it? — U — U —

Miss Sam: (sarcastic) Don't say it. Haines? Can't say it. She's trying to put it in your mouth.

Brooks: (sarcastic) The answer? Oh, my God! Thanks, Miss Sam.

Miss Sam: (sarcastic) O'Haines go to bed! Poor boy, you've heard enough for one night. Goodnight.

Christy: Goodnight.

Christy departs. Miss Sam advances on a laughing foot.

Brooks: I'm sorry. I didn't think you had one.

Miss Sam: Your mouth needs washing with Lysol. You need a scrubbing brush and something to your tongue.

Brooks: I'm sure Brooks didn't mean anything.

Miss Sam: I'm sure it just slipped out.

Miss Sam: You slipped out? I'd hate to hear what she'd say when she's really angry. Mr. O'Haines, I'm surprised that you've created a woman like this out to your home tonight. Just who is she?

Denny: Brooks's an old friend of the family.

Miss Sam: How come you have a friend like her? I really don't think she goes to Miss. Am I right? You're a bad Catholic, aren't you?

Brooks: You're right. I haven't declared a church door in years.

Denny: Brooks?

Brooks: The last time I attended Mass was a certain Sunday in 1932. It was in the height of the Depression. The Father Dore was being read out. (Remember?) Most of the people in that congregation found it hard to scrape together five shillings to pay for their donations. You gave twenty pounds? Even the poor old women got a drink. And you were up the front, pointing yourself like a great pharisee?

Miss Sam: Pharisee? What are you talking about? I've always given generously to the Church. (Laughs.) Catholic Church.

Brooks: You mean Church? You love yourself, you do not our wicked old traditions.

Denny: Brooks?

Miss Sam: Mr. O'Haines, I did not come here to be insulted.

Brooks: The day after you had given us magnanimously to the Church you created me from my home in Christ's Street.

Denny: Brooks? Brooks? (He's all gone.)

Brooks: Do you remember a Miss Brooks Carey?

Miss Sam: Brooks Carey? So that's who you are? Now I remember. You were behind in your rent.

Brooks: Only six shillings worth.

Miss Sam: And when a year finished?

Brooks: God knows. He kept looking for work soon after and hasn't come back. I divorced him five years ago.

Miss Sam: You're divorced?

Brooks: Yes. And I don't work at South. I'm a barmaid at the Boston Pub in Warrnambool.

Miss Sam: Oh, come! Come! A divorced

woman? Barmaid at the Boston Pub in Warrnambool? How low can a Catholic woman sink?

Mr. O'Haines: I'm disappointed. I thought the son-in-law was a happy and help occasion. It has turned into a farce! You and your wife are drinking yourselves. This does not sugar well for the future. I think you face what I mean. I strongly don't think you are fit partners for a priest. I'm afraid I must leave. Miss O'Haines, my best and most!

Denny: In the next Brooks doesn't hear you any grudge. Miss Sam.

Miss Sam: It's not a point about her leaving me a grudge. I'm the one from whom forgiveness is required. But I am not a sensitive woman. (To Brooks) I shall go over to the monastery in the morning. Thank you, Miss O'Haines. I shall light a candle for you. Miss Carey.

Brooks: You know what you can do with your bloody candle.

Miss Sam: There's a. I shall have no more. Goodnight! My and Miss O'Haines. I think you should remember your experiences with regard to your children too. The signs are not auspicious! Mark my words! Goodnight to you all!

Brooks: (to Denny) I'm sure I shall have no more. Goodnight! My and Miss O'Haines. I think you should remember your experiences with regard to your children too. The signs are not auspicious! Mark my words! Goodnight to you all!

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Mary: *How almost miracle-like. Her hand still holds it.* (O'Garrahan) But I have another sign too. Remember when I was carrying Christy and you put a family stone on it? I was playing the piano and you were sitting here on the lounge. And Christy jumped in my womb. And when I lay on the lounge you blessed Christy in my womb. You made the sign of the cross on my bare back. I felt the power of the Holy Ghost coming in. I felt the power of the Holy Ghost coming in. I knew this (but) I was carrying a son and that he would be a priest.

O'Garrahan's hand is dropped. Mary begins to chant from the Proper of the Mass for the Annunciation, part of the Reading from Luke the Prophet.

Mary: Hail ye, therefore, O House of David. The Lord Himself shall give you a sign. (He shall a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel. He shall on tender and honey, that he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good.)

(Tucking) To tell with Miss Sue. To tell with her sister. I love my sign? I have my sign? And they shall not be taken from me? And they shall not be taken from me? All mine. All mine. (Mary flowers get silent and pull O'Garrahan to the door.)

Brooks: Come on, Father. Let's go. You've done enough damage for one night.

O'Garrahan: Remember in confession, Peter, or Pile o' Spirits Sanctus.

He is joined out of the door in. Heaven. Mary does not see them go. Brooks gets up and goes across to Mary.

Brooks: (Gently) Making Mary? Mary? Mary? **Mary:** Coming out of Jesus? What is it, Brooks? **Brooks:** (Tucking Mary to chest) I'll do down. Mary just relax a moment. I'm going to make you a glass of white wine. And then I'll put you to bed. All right?

Mary: (A little) Brooks. **Brooks:** Good. Long peace.

Denny: Why did you let O'Garrahan touch you? Why did you let him blow you on your sainted belly?

Mary: I wanted a proper blessing. I wanted him to get so close to my unborn child as possible.

Denny: And you took your daughter off?

Mary: No! No! I simply liked my dress and lowered my bloomers — just enough to let him breathe a large blessing on my baby — a large sign of the cross.

Denny: How could you let a man do that to you?

Mary: A man? He's not a man! He's a priest!

Denny: He's a man, and a really one at that! He had no right to touch you.

Mary: No right to touch me? What are you talking about? If a doctor can touch me when I'm pregnant, why can't a priest?

Denny: You said, 'Mind woman! What gets into you?' Presumably don't go round touching up women, pregnant or not. What is there between you and O'Garrahan? What's been going on all night? You've been moaning away at him as though he's Errol Flynn. You were in shoes under your bed, don't you?

Mary: He's a Priest! A Priest! He's about all that!

Denny: He's a really famous man. I'll be! You're so sure you got those beans on your hand that you've got them on your arm.

Mary: I have the beans! I have the sign!

Denny: (Grabbing her hand and examining the policy) The only letter you have at the letter. M. M. for me!

Mary: No! Mother! Mary!

Denny: O my sweet Jesus, what have you done? You've brought fish and cats into this house. You destroy everything for me. Look. I'm only a common labourer — a pattern in a furnace and I'll be that till the day I die. But I didn't want that for my boy. I want something better. And you drag him down!

Tocky: And ten months from the altar. Have you forgotten that?

Mary: You know of that, you bloody trigger!

Denny: You do my everything for me! Just look at the way you speak! How can Christy be a pure priest with a mother like you?

Mary: What have I done? All I wanted was a blessing on my unborn babe. Nothing else.

Tocky: You did! You wanted more!

Mary: I never before. God all I wanted was a consecrated hand on my belly!

Denny, not a thing, leaving the door and sleep into his bedroom. Mary falls to her knees, groaning. Denny backs off.

Denny: There's a blessing on your belly. (He pulls it sideways.)

Tocky: Get up! Get up! You're only dreaming! Get up! You haven't had all that's coming to you. Get up!

He roughly pulls Mary to her feet. Mary pushes him off.

Mary: Get your fucking hands off me!

Tocky: What did you say?

Mary: You heard me.

Tocky: I did too. Take that.

Tocky rolls and rolls back, presently is left for. She falls to the floor. Tocky, breathing heavily, crawls away from her. Mary, eyes cast, looks across with eyes of milk.

Brooks: Mary! What happened?

Tocky: He's all right.

Mary: He's in me.

Brooks: What?

Mary: He's bottled in.

Tocky: She deserved it.

Brooks: Denny? (Denny looks away. Brooks turns to Tocky) I did you enjoy it, Tocky? Did it give you a good start? Better than an old fashion snuggle. You're still a virgin.

Tocky: She deserved it.

Brooks: You did? You wanted. Come, love, I'll take you to bed. I don't understand you, Denny.

Denny: I can control myself. I'm sorry.

Brooks: I just don't understand you. I'll look after you, Mary. I'll stay the night. You two can stay out here. You deserve each other.

Brooks leaves Mary and Tocky.

Tocky: Let me have another whisky.

Denny: Finished. Here, have some of my home

brew.

Tocky: She deserved it.

Denny: I suppose she did.

Tocky: You're not angry with me are you?

Denny: No. Tocky. No. I'm not angry with you.

Tocky: She deserved it. Say she deserved it.

Denny: She deserved it.

Tocky: Thanks Denny. Thanks. Here. Here. Here's what you've been after all night.

Denny: Five pounds. Tocky! Five pounds! That's wonderful! I know you wouldn't let me down. You're a good little soul!

Tocky: Things will be the same?

Denny: Thanks a lot. Tocky. Things will be the same.

Tocky: Denny? I can't taste the licorice.

Denny: I said you like taste would go away.

Tocky: I can't taste the licorice.

Denny: It's coming hard.

Tocky: Forget the room. Forget the room. It's nice and dry in here.

Denny: Near and cozy.

Tocky: No wonder to dream in.

Denny: No wonder to dream in.

Tocky: Singapore won't tell will it Denny?

Denny: No. Tocky. Singapore won't tell.

Tocky: I won't have to go away and fight.

Denny: You won't have to go away and fight.

Tocky: Singapore won't tell. (He falls against the piano and slides to the floor where he lies prone. Bloody piano.)

Denny: Are you all right, Tocky?

Tocky: I'm all right. Denny. Let me be. I just want to rest. Singapore won't tell.

Denny: No. Tocky. No. I'll be down here on the sofa. (He turns the light off.) Goodnight. Tocky. Pleasant dreams. (He answers from Tocky.) (The light switches go to sleep.)

Denny falls asleep on the sofa. Noise of heavy rain. Christy in crumpled pyjamas enters. Long peace. He stands surveying the scene. Then Brooks joins him.

Christy: What's happened Brooks? What's wrong?

Barbara West (Mary O'Garrahan) and Leslie Dorman (Denny O'Mahony)
Photographer: David Wilson



Bruder: Nothing's wrong, little man. Nothing's wrong!

Christy: (singing to Tooty and Gerald) I don't understand!

Bruder: You will one day. You're only a little boy.

Long, meaningful Coo. Girl's whistle.

Christy: What's under that?

Bruder: Depress!

Christy: Depress? It's midnight! I've never been up so late. I heard the cove — and the cove. I mean sleep.

Bruder: Come with me, Christy. Let's start a new day together. I'll be with you.

Christy: Yes. (singing with me)

Bruder: Yes, darling. We'll sleep with you. And we'll sing the song together. That's a great way of falling asleep. Sleep, (this something sleep. Have you got the song book I gave you.

Christy: Yes, Bruder. I've got them here.

Bruder: Well, come, little man. Let's go to bed and say the song. The Song about Myself, if I can still remember them. Yes, I think I can. 'The Agency in the Garden, The Songing at the

Pillar the Crowning with Thorns, the Caring of the Cross, the Crucifixion (Please Christ in Christy's love. They walk off stage together. *Bruder holding Christy closely.*

End



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DETAILS OF THIS EXCITING NEW SEASON**

Swan Lake

A moment of light and joy to relieve the general, all-encompassing gloom.

The news that almost a dozen dancers from the Australian Ballet have left the company to seek greener pastures in Europe and the United States, would apparently not give cause to the dancers of the Company this year at least. The fact that the majority of the dancers are established stars and principals makes the problem worse, then, not better, reliable talents left to replace them. It was of course in the books that such scenes would be taken over Anne Woolliams had finally left the Company. Some of the dancers left did it sympathetically, not without hope because they are fed up with the conservative climate and artistic stagnation within the Company brought about mainly by the interference of a conservative box-office placated administration. But they going over all of that before and to say it again would be just repetition.

The quality of the Company has fallen, as has its image in the eye of the public, to find this public that knows about dance and what it can be. Many members of the Press regularly stagger about the Company and give it a second-hand, used or near-used status in the papers. With matters the way they are with the power pyramid as it exists, things are going to get worse before they are going to get better.

But at least last year, there was a moment of light and joy to relieve the general all-encompassing gloom. Anne Woolliams, remaining of the Prima Danseuse class, Swan Lake. There were of course the usual scenes caused mainly by those who know nothing about dance questioning why the Australian Ballet should be doing Swan Lake anyway, it seemed to them to be wrong but an old cliché was born.

The simple answer to all that is that the Company did it because the critics so often.

A classical ballet company without a Swan Lake is like an opera company without *Viagra* or *Puccini* or a theatre company without Shakespeare. Swan Lake is the central well-spring of classical ballet. One of the great examples of the work is that it is the greatest dramatic ballet in the repertoire, acceptable dancing is not enough to get a performer through. It demands everything, acting, ability as well. It stretches a dancer in all aspects of his or her and not only the principals but the corps de ballet in general and the female dancers in particular.

Unlike other nineteenth century classics, then, can be well effectively produced can be, created on one hand. Ballet is the metaphor

everybody knows. Finally, full state despotic, treated as a pleasant after dinner entertainment at best and a glorified as and leave there for the First Opera Jockey club is worse.

Prima and Danseur were the point of departure for all of the Daughters choreographers. Fokine, Massine, Nijinsky, Nijinsky and Balanchine. Swan Lake after there was a saying that was equal to the power and depth of the music, because the imagination of ideas, ballet. Nijinsky believes in the story in the story and he will hardly always think of Swan Lake. It is just the fantasy that can't really make the work, a dancer's own imagination.

It is Anne Woolliams, past triumph in conjunction with John Landberry, dancer and conductor and Tom Lapwood, her and costume designer that the work makes an overall impact, a work together collectively. The old producers of the Company did not that Fokine and Nijinsky danced in was wonderful enough but the mood and atmosphere was passed on top of the dancing, the sense of period was hardly over there. It had no stage. Lapwood and Woolliams have set this new production firmly in modern Germany, dark lighting and costumes that sort of saying what you can believe in evil. Lighter looking young models in local under a space where you accept young parties as it is to escape the suffocating gloom of even rural and arranged marriages.

For one of the greatest beauties of the new production is that there is a feeling that it belongs to the Australian Ballet alone as if the work had been newly created on stage. There are parts and they were specifically tailored for certain dancers within the Company and therefore it is a work that will grow and expand and deepen in understanding as the Company continues to perform it.

Woolliams, following score precedent has welded together Acts I and II ensuring the greatest continuity between the increased number of scene transitions and the first world here a beauty of the first lake encounter.

It must be mentioned here that one of the most successful moments of the production is the palpable and real role played by the lake itself. As designed by Lapwood it is a continuous presence. In so that it breathes and serves through out the story and on the final scene elements in release and freedom is the dancing eye of the story for the whole to feel.

Landberry too has done masterfully

reconstruction of the story, especially in the first scene in Act I and finished where they find you do that in a totally bare stage. He has kept the mood dark and strange, by using an atmosphere from Tchaikovsky. Instead of the earlier time to turn music, mostly used and Woolliams has not photographed the scene also keeping the mood and intense interior and forest brooding, no grand balletic lifts or phony flailing of arms to approximate unaccompanied love and passion.

There are faults in the work of course, and something should be done about them. Act I is far too long with unnecessary overtures, flingings and pages wandering about with a lack of purpose and point. The point for the male corps at the end of the act as they come, Nijinsky to go lighting with them at stage, they and anxiously danced. The latter fault could be due to the lack of rehearsal time for the male corps after all Swan Lake is still an essentially female dominated ballet. The men will probably get their chance to shine in *Spartacus* later this year.

But the merits of the production far outweigh the faults.

Woolliams has wisely kept the former choreographer for Act II. It would be only in its otherwise apart from being a mistake. Because one would have to be a moral lesson, master choreographer to come up with something just as expressive and poetic as she did a complete overhaul on the whole, better like John Noyes's staging for the Hamburg Ballet, which turned the whole thing into a dream fantasy of mad King Ludwig II of Bavaria.

But his criticism and let us choreographer Ray Powell have done marvels with Act IV. The scene fairly drops with reasons: regret and impending tragedy from the very ending of the curtain. The deep mistakes of truth and ugliness from the audience were well deserved. The only shape on the stage at the beginning of the act is that of a huge wing shape of point returns on the stage then coming back in column deeper and regaining in quick flight like trapped birds, winging from one side of the stage to another, a silent and beautiful stage. But of course, nothing in Swan Lake, either the dancing or the drama would be what it is without the principal roles. Odette/Olga and Prince Siegfried.

In terms of a partnership the first night team of Rose Storch and Michaela Kilian was the best. Although they were the best at short notice they worked as well as collaborators that the

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sure they'll be paired off together in a bit of performance and not only of Swan Lake. They weren't quite so convincing in the star parts of *The Merry Widow* again perhaps for lack of preparation but in *Swan Lake*, they were excellent. Kerklaide had the right manner and the deep haunting face that suited her interpretation, that of the Swan Queen being essentially a character, a woman, an incarnation of the Prince's fancy. Her dancing, especially in the Act II pas de deux was fluid without being floppy, dramatic without being grandiose and without so girly a person as to miss enough of a wing of femininity to make the love scene sad.

Ross Serebrin, a strong and positive partner, acted the part in *Requiem*, making him not only Hamlet's dreamer but a forthright male who knows his mind. Very Byronic.

The last partnership of Gary Norman and guest star Odette Samsonova was not quite so good. They were equal in height and stature, but Norman seemed preoccupied and awkward when performing as Samsonova in his part, while Samsonova as Odette was as dry and brittle as a packet of craps. Her balance and attack for the part of Odette, the malevolent Odette a little ago in

Act III was much more a need to her hand and brilliant style of dancing.

But for and away all things being considered the finest Odette/Odette of the lot of them was Yvonne Harwood, looking from the Majestic Ballet of Canada I hope. Australia sees more of her, she is a dancer and one soon due to become a star of international standing. She points the line of a dance, she phrases it with exactitude and perfect gracefulness. As Odette she fell into the Prince's embrace as Odette she didn't put me on points, she let it flow so it inevitably would glitter and shine and back again in the final act. A masterly interpretation. Kerven One appreciates there was sure, fluid and an admirable partner, but he just didn't project. He rarely does. He treated Harwood in just another ballroom, the lack of identification with both role and story was obvious.

A pity it was missing something, the dancing was marvellous, but the sense of convincing realism was not apparent with this team. In particular it was from Serebrin and Kerklaide. The future partnership I hope to see in *Brno* and *Adieu* this year in Sydney. They've been tried out in other cities in the particular ballet

before. When I saw Samsonova in *Brno* back in 1975, I noted his promise. By now he's undoubtedly married, to his Kerklaide. When they appear together this time, the sense the partnership will be something to watch out for.

The reason for Sydney includes *Spontaneous Memory Anger*, *Le Fil de Mel Garder* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Other works include *Jacques Rabreau's* *Figure Works* by new work *Spontaneous* choreographers for Ryan and Louis Fokas as well as *Australian*, *Gwynne Murphy*. Later on the Company will appear at the Spontaneous Festival as an evening of works selected by the group of *Amos* (this year's theme apparently). Murphy will be choreographing something of *Amos's* *Spontaneous* from *Spontaneous* the Company embarked on a tour of Israel.

All very promising. I would imagine her unless there are enough good dancers to take the place of those who have departed. I don't think the move will be greatly to the Company's benefit. One only hopes that the Sydney season will uncover some new new talent in the home team otherwise there will have to be some hefty recruitment from overseas.

A Collector's Item?



Not just—but as the first of the
'Performing Arts Year Book' series, it soon will be!
SPECIAL OFFER to readers of 'Theatre Australia'

FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS YEAR BOOK (1980) (1981) (1982) (1983) (1984) (1985) (1986) (1987) (1988) (1989) (1990) (1991) (1992) (1993) (1994) (1995) (1996) (1997) (1998) (1999) (2000) (2001) (2002) (2003) (2004) (2005) (2006) (2007) (2008) (2009) (2010) (2011) (2012) (2013) (2014) (2015) (2016) (2017) (2018) (2019) (2020) (2021) (2022) (2023) (2024) (2025) (2026) (2027) (2028) (2029) (2030) (2031) (2032) (2033) (2034) (2035) (2036) (2037) (2038) (2039) (2040) (2041) (2042) (2043) (2044) (2045) (2046) (2047) (2048) (2049) (2050) (2051) (2052) (2053) (2054) (2055) (2056) (2057) (2058) (2059) (2060) (2061) (2062) (2063) (2064) (2065) (2066) (2067) (2068) (2069) (2070) (2071) (2072) (2073) (2074) (2075) (2076) (2077) (2078) (2079) (2080) (2081) (2082) (2083) (2084) (2085) (2086) (2087) (2088) (2089) (2090) (2091) (2092) (2093) (2094) (2095) (2096) (2097) (2098) (2099) (2100) (2101) (2102) (2103) (2104) (2105) (2106) (2107) (2108) (2109) (2110) (2111) (2112) (2113) (2114) (2115) (2116) (2117) 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A total success or half a disaster

This year's summer season of The Australian Opera at the Sydney Opera House was either a total success or half a disaster, depending on a considerably degree on how you feel about heavily subsidised grand opera companies defiling one the wonders of opera.

Even those who like me, doubt seriously the wisdom of the AOs of this world producing Franz Lehár's *Merry Widow* and as all had to concede the whole exercise was perhaps almost worth while for the endemantic pleasure of seeing Joan Sutherland perform the title role even if it afforded her grossly minimal opportunities to display her incredible vocal mastery. Other aspects of the production were a good deal less inspiring.

Neither of the seasons' conductors, Ross Sutherland and Peter van der Stoep, was anywhere near as deft and deft as the role demands, though Sutherland came a good deal closer to that mark once he had settled thoroughly into the production. *Amico*, *Amico* shows us *Camille de Rodolphe*, setting a new personal standard in vocal beauty and dramatic credibility. Indeed

Richardson was vocally, everything in *Valentine*, if marginally more dramatically.

The loss of most character roles were filled capably by a proliferation of AO principals, demonstrating once again the wealth of talent possessed by the company. Particularly worthy of note was Norma Macdonald's *Proserpine*, a gem of a dragon lady character worthy of the wildest caricatures of the *Gothic* and *Sailor* genre.

The major trouble with this *Merry* was that when the concert hall at the Opera House is simply not largeable to operate with spoken dialogue. Despite dramatic and dramatic simplifications, few of the spoken words came across to most of the audience. The effect would probably have been much more satisfactory in a production such as those last of course the opera house at the Opera House was unavailable during this period due to work on the enlargement of its orchestra pit.

Within the limits of the venue, Kristian Fredriksson's set design was most effective, particularly from the close circle where its ornamental bulk seemed off the permanent setting behind the stage project was less noticeable and

the costumes were splendidly opulent, changing on-stage scheme from such as timber sets.

It was a long evening, due to the restoration of some vocal cuts, the addition of a rather extensive (but well conceived) if not impossibly extravagant ballet at the beginning of the third act, and the inclusion in that act of two acts not usually heard.

Finally, though the greatest joy of the evening was to experience Sutherland the comic actress. She delivered her spoken lines with obvious enjoyment, considerable wit and utmost clarity. Had the rest done half as well, the overall touch would have been a good deal harder to fault.

Even those who had serious reservations about the choice of *The Merry Widow* for inclusion in this all-concert hall summer season could hardly have objected to the choice of Verdi's *Macbeth* as its stable mate, and indeed a pretty well laid up-to-advance expectations.

There was some new production incorporating the costumes of Tom Langwood's 1971 production with production for The Australian Opera as well as two of its main leads. Robert



Joan Sutherland (*The Widow*), Gordon Wilcock (*Baron Zerk*), John Curran (*Count*), Kristian Fredriksson (*Amico*) and Donald Solomon, Robert Prosschke (*in the AOs Merry Widow*)



Ron Stevens (Don Juan in the AD's *Merry Widow*)

Allman as the role now and Donald Shanks as the high priest, Giuseppe.

Lampwood's new set design is not the concert hall scenario it might get starkly effective in establishing the mood of the piece in scenes as the audience enters the hall: a single enormous light of wisp, black and amber, smelt directly at the audience, with a huge darky glowering Star of David suspended high above the performing area.

The scene changes are minimal when compared with the spectacular visual trickery of Lange and's 1975 *Side*. This is no fault in itself, perhaps, since the demands of *Nabucco* are inherently much less spectacular though there were perhaps too few visual clues to make it clear to those who had not read their plot summaries in advance that the action was moving from a temple in various parts of

Nabucco's palace and to the Hanging Gardens of Babylon in quick succession. But Nabucco's first entrance, afterworded many times larger than life against a white curtain high above the rest of those on stage, was highly impressive, as was the burning of the temple at the end of Act I, with the whole vaulted ramparts of the concert hall going up in projected flames at full view of the audience.

Both Allman and Shanks were in fine voice and impressive acting form, further refining the already excellent performances they had given in this opera in an earlier version. Lore Rappold-Warber was a thoroughly committed Abigaille dramatically, but lacks a measure of the vocal resources necessary to do full justice to the rapidly changing demands of the part in purely dramatic terms.

Margaret Oliva was an interesting newcomer

to the cast in the role of Fenice, using the dark, lower reaches of her rich mezzo to fine effect to give the character far more weight and importance than she sometimes has. Though occasionally the role may have been a trifle high, she showed no noticeable signs of difficulty in coping with its vocal demands on opening night. Lambert Furler was a very good Ismaele though of course the part is very much overshadowed vocally by the three main protagonists who get just about all the vocal fireworks (celebrations).

David Henthorn's production was very successful in conveying a real sense of liquidity of action, aided immensely by the flights of wags which made it possible to these performers in spectacular moments of action and allow them to tell out their thrillingly whenever moments of vocal intensity. Verdis, especially, is accepted without criticism.

In the production and in action, the physical arrangement would not have worked because anyone very far up the stage would have been swallowed vocally by the stage tower, but in the concert hall it worked marvellously. Similarly the chorus was most impressive throughout — but particularly of course in its famous big moment. In summary, when the captive *Merry Widow* comes sing its typical Verdi style of the delights of freedom, liberation and religious and

Richard Kopyayev's conducting was sensitive and accurate throughout, and the Flindersian Sydney Orchestra responded well. Kopyayev's overall interpretation leaned a little too far for my taste toward the lyrical side of the spectrum as opposed to the fire-and-brimstone side making the score sound at times excessively more like *Belshazzar* or *Don Giovanni* than the fairly accessible early Verdi's.

There were of course musical compensations in terms of pure beauty of sound, but here and there I found myself lamenting the loss of a significant aspect of the experience that the impact built into the work.

Space prevents me from reviewing in detail any of the large number of year-end productions, I was able to see in Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra and Inland as well as The Australian Opera's Gilbert and Sullivan seasons at the Sydney Opera House and a couple of productions by the newly Sydney opera group. Best moments of these high lights must suffice:

1. Robin Lampwood's production for the Victoria State Opera of *Salvatore's Prisoner* and *Mohawks* in November, under the wonderful musical direction of Richard Davis, starring Yvonne Kenny, Graham Wall, John Pople and Noel Morgan.

2. Ron Hensley's Canberra/Inland revival of *Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors* especially for the superb performances of Tom Allan in the title role and Mike Allen (no relation to the boy's mother).

3. David Henthorn's staging in the round of the colonial novel *Australian Frontier* by Roger Cavell's University of New South Wales Opera last in October.

F

Summerfield and Beyond



Elizabeth Riddell / Terry Owen (left to right)

And who has star quality? The two names that come off the top of the head are Helen Morse and John Waters.

Just before beginning this article I was browsing through the film sections of the London libraries *Olympia*, *Sunder Ties* and so on, and I was to discover what this article had to say about John Riddell's film, *Summerfield*, when I came on some remarks about *Cable*.

Cable started a run in London early in October. One critic wrote: "*Cable* is a quality production, taking no much more than eight or 10 long features, with a comic plot for the many facilities which the modern Australian cinema has probably not yet got. *Cable* has a very pretty girl (Helen Morse) as heroine."

Another: "Nothing much happens by the standards of soap opera, but all the little small details and minor virtues of it together hold our interest without flagging. Helen Morse, in terms of star quality, makes *Cable* a lovely thing, which it is a pleasure to follow down descender through successive friendships and quarrels, celebrations and disappointments until the daughter, seven years later in the Depression, is a free and independent woman and

would have been proud to have known."

There are two points to be made from this. One is that some Australian films put abroad in Britain and some get reviewed and some get good reviews; for instance *Phone at Hong Kong*, *Rock*, *Cable* and most of all *The Devil's Playground* (films actually travel better than books). Among the only awards from Australian sources to be reviewed recently in London have been Robert Dorn's *The Savage*, *Cross* and Frank Macpherson's *Tales of Mystery* and *Adventure*, which were published in London by Collins and Angus and Robertson and a 100 years old Thomas Kennedy's reprint of *The Sun* series also published by Collins.

The other point is the use of the phrase "star quality." Star quality will come in many more and more on the domestic market as well as overseas.

And who has star quality? The two names that come off the top of the head are Helen Morse and John Waters. That is people will go to a cinema to see them regardless of the film. They are the performers the audience is

watching even when they are merely on the side of the action. For instance, in *Summerfield*, Waters held the audience while taking things making, with a lot of people in his scene, while Sam Tami and Michelle Jansen were talking and "singing."

What is not to say that Nick Tate did not do as well as the boys allowed him in *Summerfield* (but some changes in personality and performance will have to be made before he actually "commands" the screen. I should like to suggest if they happen).

Stars are accidental but the industry needs them. It also needs star-questers and managers and promoters, people who will see talent and who will be willing to invest in it, to take the boring supercilious distance between years and accomplishment. They will of course also have to convert the preferences of people which will answer him or her that there is nothing to learn, that it all comes naturally and educate actors in the need to understand the body and how physical moments can be turned into plots. (Helen Morse and John Waters are good examples.)

Which brings us to *Summerfield*. *Summerfield* has a lot of things going for it — it is a literary story, for a change, it has a magical setting in Phillip and Churchill Islands, it has John Waters, it has Nick Tate, interesting to watch again after his masterly depiction (rewarded with a *Sammy* of the nearly colossal *Brother* in *The Devil's Playground*) in his by memorable inter-quality coming up? Elizabeth Alexander, a cool and talented beauty, at her a little bit, Mailele Jensen it has Bud Tinsell's country doctor all round and hard watching. Add splendid camera work by Mike Molloy, and the screen is for

What it doesn't have is a good script, and because it doesn't have a good script it doesn't have good direction. Or could good direction have saved it from banality without later than, comes that last sentence? And that includes not writing a word, and not getting the picture from right. It is simply not true that some say mean that making with camera produces territorial defects.

So once you get the story wrong, and once you start lying false truth, what is there? Well there are those two things I mentioned earlier.

I am not however promising to say that *Summerfield* won't get audiences. It caught it at a morning session in a Sydney cinema. The place was about two thirds full of the kind of people who go to evening cinema — no lost males and females without jobs, or on shiftwork, or on holiday. They were an appreciative audience, with goodwill towards the Australian movie which is as real a reflection of how far we have

come. Because a year or so ago this kind of audience would not have been seen dead at an Australian film, and would never have encountered the *Summerfield* cast except on television.

But it was clear from the conversation of people behind me — there is a theory that people have talk all through movies because they have grown accustomed to talking all through television in their living rooms — that they expected something to come of the exchange our heroes ambiguous conversation with the policeman that they were passed how anxiously could get the car from the sea below the cliff's side a dead in a paddock that they didn't understand the significance of the emotion that was being shown that they thought the incorrect introduction of her life was significant. And that, like me, they were caught on in the "mystery" of the child's father.

The few months leading up to Christmas were very busy for filmmakers. Fred Schepers' *The Chain of Smoky Blackheads* shot in the New England District of NSW and on the central coast took a single week and \$1.2 million. *The Mango Tree* from Ronald McKinnon took of the same name produced by Michael Pate and directed by Kevin Deane on a budget of \$650,000 with a lot of local names — Christopher Fair, Diana Davis, Robert Helpmann, Catherine Fugard (penned) and Gerald Kennedy — was wrapping to get captured in time for Christmas. *The Night the Pioneer* from Shamus' film of the Pioneer

White story of the same title, got going in November. *The Andromeda* starring Michael Cheong and some splendid Cydonias and women and directed by Donald Combie (who directed *Castle* finished in the spring, with a \$380,000 budget. Hugh Johnson's novel about the pygmy, kept at small country towns in theme than has served a lot of American filmmakers well as an area was made into a movie called *Brother of Shadow* directed by Tom Jeffrey who made the ill-fated *The Remains* about four years ago with John Waters and Melissa Laffer. And there's *Dawn*, with Ken Hannan (*Summerfield*) directing, on a budget of \$125,000. *Airframe*, written by the industrialist Bob Ellis for a half million dollar budget about the days of Chancery and Fox Marston whose words, mixed painfully with owners clips of royalty, pencils and selling ships, and to provide the feature as more houses in the good old days.

Last last year the Australian Film Commission released a list of projects which had been given the go ahead when it is the code for script developments and pre-production, and for production. These included *Space Trip* (Mary Lavan *Peter Loves Paul*), *The Ruby* and the *Stone* from Tom Hangerford's book, *Four Wheel Drive*, *All the King's Horses*, *Dawn*, *Blaze*, *The Old Angus*, *Dawn* (a novel about the Victorian War by William Nagle), *The Rowan Connection*, *The Last Fairweather*, *Partner*, and *Sparks* were also pending.

Charles's Bailey

The Bucks Party



The Bucks Party is Western Australia's most successful producer Steve Jackson's first film.

and it's a hell of a lot better than some unstarred Australian director's second and third feature films. Granted that it has five minutes, a standard for the usual feature length and doesn't need to justify its comparison directly with feature, it's a copybook example of a good dramatic idea being given small scale treatment appropriate to available local resources and coming off very successfully because of, rather than in spite of, those resources.

Steve Jackson, who is a part-time actor-part-time stage-director-part-time film-maker and full-time lecturer in film and television at the Western Australian Institute of Technology, made the film in 1979 with an all amateur cast and a production budget of \$15,000, repaid by \$12,000 from the Australian Film Commission's Experimental Film and Television Fund. As its title says it is about that strange Australian male ritual: the get-together called up with the mates which has delivered a lot of Aussie grooves and songs to their loving ladies.

Jackson's back a penny takes place in a secluded bush setting, with a sparkling (very good and old) struggle game as the peaceful backdrop to the more crude and mindlessly racist games that and has come play with these found Kenny the game. There's a veiled edge to the bounding atmosphere they deal out as Kenny and anyone else in the mob who looks or acts a bit different. We feel that edge and Jackson's

story telling, assisted by David Rapley's editing, makes those of us with a sophisticated turn of mind want to ask, why some Australian males are locked into these social stereotypes. The film clearly offers its own point of view on this concern but it also makes space for the viewer's conscious engagement to get to work during those after the film in the drunken Friday night traffic.

The director handles action very well indeed for a beginner, and the two married scenes, one involving a mirror and the other a division 'accident' are totally convincing. Jackson says that almost everything in the movie has happened at various local parties he's been to and his film makes you believe them.

Tony Buckley one of Australia's best-known film producers and editors saw the film during its initial opening session at Cinema 16, the new screening area at the Perth Institute of Film and Television complex at Fremantle. Buckley said the film is the most powerful statement about the Australian male since *Made in England* and he took a print back to Sydney with him, with the aim of getting it shown up to 35mm to give it a chance to get full commercial cinema release as a support.

The next step for Jackson is now the feature full length feature, so watch for him some among the credits over the next year or two.

Terry Owen



Rossini and Elizabeth I of England

Rossini's Elizabeth, Regina di Inghilterra is an opera that could give a hearty surprise to an audience in an under-informed music academy. It begins with a piece of music that everyone knows as the overture to *The Barber of Seville*. Rossini's use of it for *Elizabeth* was an earlier occasion but it will be some time again with the help of the less complete knowledge of the opera (Philip 470 067-3 disc) before it shows us well known scenes identify with Rossini's so many operas on the subject of the first Queen Elizabeth and her relationship with the Earl of Leicester.

Elizabeth was an unusually splendid and elegant piece designed by an composer to quell the golden scepters directed towards him by the Neapolitans on the grounds that he was a foreigner who had gained his reputation elsewhere. Rossini wrote most of the score (mainly with keyboard accompaniment alone which had been standard in most operas up to this time). The recitatives in *Elizabeth* are almost accompanied by the orchestra. Further, Rossini appears to have begun with this opera the practice of writing out in full all the embellishments which singers had formerly added to the vocal line according to their own taste and flavor. Rossini's object was not to stop-embellishment but to keep it within bounds and to make sure that it was relevant to the shape of the original melodic line. Sometimes the rigidity and symmetry of Rossini's art and that vocal ornamentation may reveal us by its seemingly practical profession on the printed page. When the singers are in command of the music, however, and are not merely lulled by their effect can be utterly convincing. The music needs great singers and those from all the evidence available must be enough sure now that they were in Rossini's lifetime.

Information Canada who takes the role of Elizabeth is certainly among the most efficient use of present day singers and the understudy Rossini's style, as the first demonstrated on previous recordings and as the proven in this new recording. Really in the marvelous scene of recognition and introduction with which it ends, her voice is not always as beautiful as in earlier acts, and some of her periodically feminine waxes in the recording are not so unpleasant as first.

In general, nevertheless, this is singing worthy of the music and worthy of the fine recording. Joe Caraceni, Canada's prince, sings the part of Leicester with his characteristically young but even polished voice. Valerie Minkovich an English singer of talent is Maidsie, a daughter of Mary Stuart whose Leicester is supposed to have married, thereby making deep disgrace and even death from Elizabeth. The loving interference of the courtier audience in Rossini's music defines itself in the company of the part of

France. Maidsie's brother is a mezzo-soprano. Usually, the principal villain of the opera, the Duke of Norfolk, is another tenor and so is the sympathetic captain of the guard. The opera is not for those who and no baritone or bass in the sort of circumstances that makes many opera companies shy away nervously from the task of staging the serious operas of Rossini.

This recording has a good cast, an excellent chorus (the Anderson Singers) and a first class orchestra - the London Symphony Orchestra - all combined with sympathy and flair by Gianluigi Nanni. I recommend the set as long as my prospective listener has not arrived by its intensity of history. The coat of arms in Nanni's scene the next is taken out of his memory of a stage play he had attended on a similar subject and no doubt added his own touch by the further display with history. Rossini no more worried about historical accuracy than he felt attacked at borrowing music from his own earlier work. The overture itself (the one which is now attached to most people's minds in *The Barber of Seville*) was slightly adapted from an overture written two years earlier for an opera called *Andromache in Fideles*. For that matter, he used part of Elizabeth's entrance aria for a section of Rossini's famous overture. One more piece in *The Barber of Seville* was modestly applied when he first realized that his music would be subjected in the process of being printed in a collected edition and he would have been equally surprised to think that it would have been possible, certainly for us to compose such of his operas on disc. He wrote for an opera industry in which the only interesting opera was the first one and he never had any thought at the time of writing for posterity or eternity.

Handel wrote his *Royal Fireworks Music* to celebrate the Peace of Antia in 1704 at a performance at Vauxhall Gardens, London. Because King George II is known to have been anxious that the musicians involved should belong to the military tradition there is a claim to believe that the original version was for windband, brass and drums only. Michel Piguet and his wonderful ensemble together with the National Tarn Rhod Ensemble have recorded the *Fireworks Music* with brass close to its original specifications (Naxos 812 1844) but with reductions in numbers between eleven and fifteen of the original twenty four, for example. I believe that the main sound better in the original form than in the various arrangements in which it is normally played in the concert hall.

I cannot give an outright recommendation to the sound of this disc. The tone it gives off is rather shadowy, lacking the full presence and flare that is conceivable of the kind should have been able to achieve on record. The music

stays close of the same wind and percussion scoring conducted by Charles Mackerras and everything much more closely with the full wind specifications of the original. Mackerras gathered the players together from the leading London orchestras. I understand after concert tours in a last night concert is still preferable and may be available (all on the Pye label). It is at least listed in the latest catalogue I have to hand. If you can't get hold of the Mackerras recording on Pye, then at least the recent disc is worth having and includes some more music scored for military or quasi military non-musical formations by Lully, J.P. Krieger, Telemann and Handel himself.

Age has increased on disc (and also on cassette) a beautifully performed selection of recitatives of the collection of madrigals composed in honour of Elizabeth I and entitled *The Triumph of Oriana* (2K 23). If you have a fine recollection of reading in an older history of music that the collection was intended not for Elizabeth but for Anne of Denmark, be aware that musical research has since disproved that particular theory and rescued the collection to the great queen. Furthermore - though this is a much more debatable - there is now a theory that the Oriana madrigals were intended for a female performance at a ceremonial occasion. If the madrigals were indeed meant for a female vocal performance it is at least possible that the singers would have been reinforced by instrumentalists. Taking this last as the case, Guyton Burgess on the disc directs not only the Purcell Chorus of Voices but also the London Concert and Sordani Ensemble and the Elizabethan Consort of Voice. It is an old fallacy that madrigals of the period were invariably sung unaccompanied. The descriptions and surviving scores of many entertainments of the period not to mention the surviving court accounts, make it abundantly clear that the Oriana madrigal was a three part of piece and was presented with the utmost splendour and variety of resources, in contrast to the madrigal intended for domestic or non before use. There is a certain amount of what some listeners might call generosity on the record - notes of rebuffs, ornamentation effects - a couple of scallops from George Perle's *Anglo-American* and so on. But these can always be eliminated after a first hearing and they in no way detract from the music proper. Four anonymous instrumental pieces give variety to the recording. The best of the Oriana madrigals are among the greatest achievements of the English madrigal school and it is good to hear them sung with such vigour and skill and without the precious timidity that sometimes passes for madrigal singing.



Plays Volume 1 Miss Person The Homosexual The Four Faces Lovers' Straps by Cope (total value \$4.95)

Exit Agamemnon The Fall of the House of Atreus (Plays) 39 by Steven Berkoff (John Cullen \$11.95)

Fragment (American Theatre Workshop 14), by Bill Reid (Harcourt Educational \$2.25)

Desire, by David Edgar (Eyre Methuen \$3.80)

Mercutio Strives Silvio Quere' (John Cullen) (Plays) 371 by Paul Finner (John Cullen \$13.75)

Guerrero Strides & Abide With Me by Bruce Kestel (John Cullen \$1.00)



Goethe said that there is nothing more difficult than imagination without taste. These 17 books containing 17 scripts are presumably a random collection, coming as they do from different publishers to the offices of the magazine in time for this issue, but they go together to illustrate his aphorism — look at examples of some of the best dramatic poets of our allied imagination and see dimensions of the complexity of the issue of taste. And if there is an issue which can bring out imagination, even as it is to be used in reality, it is the subject of all these plays.

To name a collection of playwrights is like naming a recipe — there is no way of telling what might become of them at the hands of the actors for whom they are written. What seems unpleasant or unimpossible to read might on the stage prove theatrically revealing and exciting. In the publisher's blurb to the volume of Cope scripts it is claimed that although they "may not be in every case", they "could never be deemed as boring or unimportant." Indeed if the chief aim of a play is to avoid boring the audience, then there is every sign in those 100

of great theatrical stories. Goethe got his head in a simple age when everyone was presumed to have time to live the same idea of what was good taste.

Cope is an Argentinean designer, costumes and playwright, who also has acted in his plays. The first script in this volume, *Lovers' Straps* is a vivid, delightful monologue which he performed in Washington as part of the Frick 10 (the American Bicentennial celebration) wearing only high heeled shoes and green body paint. As with all the scripts in this book there are no stage directions and it is interesting to speculate on what exactly he did on stage as Lovers' in his strange Berengaria-like speechless to his crowd of her vagina in gesture of sexual gratification and get tangled between his legs and his lover. The cover shows Cope in a play which is a quiet act attached to his groin. The other plays are equally striking. One of the poets of having on stage directions is to stimulate a director or actor to explain the major visual energy of these scripts in the specific conditions of their theatre and with the specific intentions of themselves and their audience in mind. It is suggested, for example that the whole in *Desire* and *Mercutio Strives* as *The Homosexual* may be played by women or by men in drag, according to taste. The most curious and interesting of the scripts is *The Four Faces* which shows four women on men, presumably separately shooting up heaven and killing each other in an endless comic nightmare upon scenarios of William Shakespeare.

From the bluing of drugs and death (Till the young but as like kissing God? Larry Brown said not even in the bluing of sex and violence) Berkoff's "brave" appearance of the male and female form" in *First* finds sexual energy released in violence in London's First End. The characters speak in an odd and powerful manner of Chaucer's ship and Shakespearean doctors and alchemists. (My part and angel face, my blessed hair that on that sacred night became his hair) and did flow — I knew my drink was playing upon like a flag" begins a description of a little light in Jack the Roper's identity. *Agamemnon* and *The Fall of the House of Usher* are horrific readings of Poe's dreams.

Bill Reid's unique *Fragment* presents aspects of the grotesque of the Tiesman's dream and compares the various ropes pressed by the women with the past with to the which stopped the tribes heading when they were transferred to Henders Island. The third play of the issue, *Guerrero Strides* is about the destruction of the corpse of the first male of the

race just that of Trogan's forest, who was finally consumed last year after 100 years as a woman's dream. The creation of the last two scenarios, especially after they died, has become something of a symbol for the pain felt about the transformation a pain expressed by Bill Reid and consumed last year in Robert Dore's novel *The Savage Chase*.

Desire by David Edgar is a dysgenic political drama showing the rise of a neo-fascist party in England — the Nation Forward Party, a British socialist state. It is the most conventional of this group of plays, ending with a not and effective way of saying this could happen — it is up to us to stop it now. Except for its study notes in which these responsible English workers and businessmen stand around reading Hitler and plotting their loyalty to him as Carman it is all too credible. It is a play in a way that such a press effort is made to present both sides of the case, the play saying for its impact on an automatic horror response to fascism. A slight twist could make it a preface.

Paul Finner is an early product of New York's La Mama theatre. His play *Mercutio Strives* is about a playwright trying to write a play about Marcus Brutus, which seems a fairly thin idea but it involves his spirit so much more writing about someone writing novels than it seems, so much more playwrights can't do the same thing. Finner's play is slightly more than a piece of self-stitching. It presents to explore the events which show a rational man such as Brutus to murder — but with the emotional relationship between the playwright (in the play) and his character it turns out to be the playwright (which one?) one who is driven to a symbolic murder, rational though he feels he is. The playwright (in the play) must wonder at every scene and then to say his own version of what he is to be written about. He is to be written about with his character in mind for what the character's introduction would involve for his play. *Cleopatra*. The play is probably a far better than it reads and there is an element of self-parody which is not as small as it seems.

Guerrero Strides by Bruce Kestel is another strange — less formally adventurous than Reid, and more successful in a more sort of way. It deals with the defence of unimportant members of the English working class whose small actions and aspirations are ignored or feared by a system that leaves little room for them. Whereas Steven Berkoff's characters read with violence and energy, Kestel's feel and subtle and their own and his own. In *Abide With Me* they dream their own past and their own relationship of the first but their own.

Desmond O'Grady

Where are the playwrights?

or

Sixty million characters in search of an author.

A sign in a Neapolitan bus stops volumes: "Don't talk to the driver — he needs his hands for steering." In Italy, theatre is readily found in the streets. There is also the public theatre staged out by politicians whose spectacle is rather like a Kabuki play seen by a foreigner watching soccer: ridiculous, dull but when it comes watching will ever happen, there are rapid, dramatic events.

But there is life in Italian theatre as well as theatricality in Italian life. There is massive theatrical activity and a paucity of playwrights. It is largely a directors' theatre whether in plush hotels or in the ramshackle converted garages and basements of the Roman "ruff-off".

The most memorable productions I have seen in recent years were both directors' triumphs. One was Luca Ronconi's *Orlando Furioso*, the other Franco Zeffirelli's *Kamikaze* and *Kamikaze*.

Ronconi worked with Eduardo Garganelli's stage version of Ariosto's epic poem. It was presented in Rome's covered arena stadium with wheeled wooden boxes installed impermanently on stage and historical costumes sustained by wires overhead. A score would begin but before it finished audiences would be drawn elsewhere by a spectacular entry of, say, a mounted knight waving heroic lance. Spectators smiled among the various strands of action dictated by the script and nevertheless, bewildered by the formal played into Ariosto's world.

Zeffirelli staged Celine von Bernstein's 1962 play in Rome's Tintin Theatre. A five-piece orchestra played music composed for the occasion and, in what seemed a director's exclamation, ideas were projected on Hitler's rise to power which gave a deeper dimension to the political disposable boys story.

My experience with avant-garde directors have been less than ecstatic. I have shared out on Giancarlo Nanni, who works mainly in Greece but the highly-quoted Mario Perini seems to have mainly a repertoire of cinematic promiscuity (one of almost total darkness, nerve-racking noise, or variations on the upper/lower/radial theme) designed to terrify spectators, while another prominent young poetic director, Mario Ricci, makes charming use of masks, music and film projections, but he does



Along the Irish Photo G B Polino

not seem to have anything urgent to express.

Perhaps my privilege is declining. I am for a theatre of words, a theatre in which words' essential role is recognized whereas much of the Italian avant-garde is determinedly anti-word.

It is partly an attempt to liberate Italian theatre from the literary. Academic and literary traditions are so powerful that plays are considered proclamations of speeches shaped by authors in magnificent isolation, the was the accusation recently made by directors when the discussion revolved on "why are there so few Italian playwrights" which could also be called "sixty million characters in search of an author".

Writers stopped back. Novelist Goffredo Parise claimed Italians understood only gestural and metaphorical theatre. He claimed they wanted the identification of actor and person which means only writer actors, such as the Neapolitan Eduardo de Filippo or the extreme left-winged Dario Fo could emerge. An Italian director would not need a chance, Parise concluded, which explains why most writers are not tempted to try their hand.

Metaphorical associations between theatre people and writers have not prevented works of well-known writers (Alberto Moravia, Natalia Ginzburg, Giovanni Togni, Elio Sclafani

being performed. What is being sought is seems, a writer working with a company to which mutual respect is mutually beneficial.

A step in this direction will be made with the season of nine contemporary Italian plays to be presented in Rome from November. The Italian Drama Institute has decided that rather than continue to give small grants to study companies it will provide \$15,000 to companies which will present a three-week season of a new play in Rome and then tour it.

One of the plays is *Don Juan* by Dacia Maraini, the best known writer associated with Rome's literary theatre. A well-known novelist and film director, Alberto Sordani, is joint author of another of the plays *Polino* is *Polino*! a monologue by a proletarian politician.

The one-play season is a pointer to the paucity of contemporary Italian works in the major theatres. Shakespeare figures prominently there. Some interesting work has been done in studying the Italian origins of Shakespearean characters but it is not clear whether this will be an aspect of the season's *The Tropic* which Giorgio Strehler will stage in Milan, Camillo Scarlata's *Richard III*, Prokofiev and Aeschylus in *Antony and Cleopatra*, L. Aquila, Rostropovich's *As You Like It* and *Messiah for Messias* at the Rome municipal theatre which will also present Brooks's *Turner* and *Messiah of the Third Reich* and Ben Jonson's *Volpone*.

Classics are the staple there by Italian productions are listed in the Italian season, which begins in October, while Goldoni's



The Birth of Pura Photo G B Polino

Comedy like *same damn as A Comedy of Errors* is being produced in Rome.

Three Pseudos plays were staged in Rome in November. *Revere gli spiriti* (Honor to Demos is alive and *Revere l'V*) is marked as a renaissance of interest in Italy's most challenging modern playwright who does not seem to have any fans.

A glance at the bigger companies' playbills shows that people are not going to theatres for reflections on how they live. But efforts are being made to find a new relationship between audience and theatre through deconstruction of performances. This summer, for the first time, Rome municipal theatre gave open-air, high performance in schools in order to substitute what spectators would never think of attending the usual city theatres.

A new aesthetic is required and involves Italian theatre. Luca Ronconi is at work to create a new audience, and a new relationship between theatre and territory in a personal experimental project which is underway at Poesi-teatr Florence.

At once, rather than a theatrical curtain seems to protect Ronconi's project from too fast indications that it is an electronic or Peter Brook's International Centre for Theatre Research in Paris. Brook, with Ford Foundation help, was through a million dollars behind closed doors. Inquiry for theatre in Italy is wanted in his's teeth but Ronconi is doing well. Thank you, with a yearly research budget of \$77,000.

ITI Australian Centre, International Theatre Institute

193 Dwyer Street, Potts Point, N.S.W. 2011, Australia. Phone: 357 1200

President: Prof Robert Quennell Hon Sec: Dr Martin Thomas.

Editor: Susan Patterson

MUSIC THEATRE TRAINING

An interdisciplinary encounter for singers, dancers and actors will be held at Queensland House, Brookfield Hospital from June 16th to the 19th, 1978. The organizers are the Edward and Sonoma Foundation and the Musical Theatre Committee of the ITI.

The international team of instructors will be under the artistic direction of conductor Lars of Malmberg, Choreographer/Producer Doris Foss (both from Stockholm, Clapnet, Pans School Amsterdam) and others.

Those interested in attending should contact the office immediately for further information.

ENGLISH SUMMER THEATRE WORKSHOPS

Two short course/workshops will be held simultaneously at the Midland, Poppleton, Trent Park, from July 21-22, 1978.

The Performance Arts Summer School offers exploratory workshops in the inter relationship of dance, drama and music, with supporting classes in the three disciplines. Day long and ongoing projects will be a feature of the programme as well as exploration of "Popular contemporary art, dynamic personal interaction, the arts, mass and mass art, by theme, study circle experiments".

The Summer School will be staffed by Polytechnic staff who have pioneered the new B.A. Performance Arts Course.

The second course offered, "Many ways of moving 1938", focuses on the whole person, promoting a healthy body and developing movement awareness through four modules.

For further information write to David Hendson, Midland Polytechnic, Trent Park, Harlow Road, EN47T, England.

— DJF ZP Newsletter Feb, 1978

Continued from Page 11

ILLUSION COMIQUE

Ben Crumphorn does not feel at home in the serious mode of production in Australia. His own method is to work with a single group of actors for a long time, developing a style as he works, and performing it again and again, often in different production styles.

In the old days people used to say that one production of *The Tempest* formed some bridge between Australia and Asia. That's a feeling I want to have, an instinct for that experience. "The old days" is a pretty lie, but for a moment there was the Performance Style which was all we went around between '70 and '74. It was the last time because I was working with a group of people. Yes, I'd like to set up a group of my own like that again. I know a lot of actors who would like to work like that. Yet no grant given or management want to back it. In those four years it was even against Australia Council policy. They wanted to get only project grants or grants when started by bodies.

Perhaps this is what comes out of the Old Time experience. That the creation of theatre funding in Australia, now at an low level, works against any development of theatre that does not fit the pattern of a large almost nerve body, a

central number of plays a season, so every month rehearsed night actors brought in for the limited seasons, and, finally, in times of necessity, new ideas and experiment sacrificed with little regard.

"The way I work as a director, too, is not to stand there telling everybody what to do where to stand etc. I see it as providing myself as a kind of common denominator through which everybody can work. The trouble with working now is that I'm doing all the things I hate, I edit, actors whom I don't know well "move over there" and things like that."

He spent some weeks in Canberra in February directing an outdoor version of the Salzburg *Everyman*. There are other things on his calendar. An up-coming production of the *Blue Sea Club* as an epitome and as yet unperformed play from 1934. *Shower Company* at the Seymour Centre, in association with the French Department at Sydney Uni where long-time students will be able to see him rehearse and see a play they are studying from the practical point. There's also the work at NIDA, which he sees as a kind of alternative to NIDA, since NIDA ("They are students there who don't want to go into rehearsal").

But when comes out of an interview with Ben Crumphorn, and from making the cynical snap of the Old Time, is that our theatre now is so lacking in variation of approach to theatre, so

closed by the nature of our funding and our institutions, is a different concept from one so practiced and sustained in Ben Crumphorn's.

"In working — back on the old days — I much preferred to be there and work with a writer and actors. It is old time, where I'm free to remake the play for myself. I don't think theatre in Australia has a bright future. It looked so good in the late '60s. What are we doing about audiences now? We will get places. I want to do *Master George*. It might happen through NIDA, at least 50, about mid year. I'm working on a film script with David Malouf, of his novel *Johns*."

"But I'll never get to do what I want to do. No. I'll better not say that. I did really conclude that most of the ideas I had about theatre were more closely actualized years ago than recently. I even saw Japanese gardening a while ago. I found there was more in plays. But I'd even now that I want to stop. I'd love to do a popular musical. I loved *Chorus Line*. Had a lot of arguments with people about that. I really like the book. *The Sea* and *The Food Book* are wonderful. I can't believe the English reaction. They're passionate! More than everything, I always wanted to go overseas with a group of actors. We had a *Tempest* that was uniquely ours and uniquely Australian. But there was never enough push from here. Nothing happened. That kind of London I had hard to let go."



A.C.T.

ALBERT HALL

Canberra Opera 07-62446

Figaro (two hour version of *The Marriage of Figaro*)
Conductor, Keith Wilson, Director, Tolyen Luy
Design, Michael Salmon 28 March - 1 April

THE BARD'S THEATRE RESTAURANT

07-62446

Blue Hat Productions

Command Performance in honour of the visit of
HM Edward VII on the occasion of the
Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia
Directed and devised by Gordon Todd with
Monique Froelich, Thanks to Secretary
Commonwealth

CHILDERS STREET HALL

A Sketch of the Despatch by Jack Hibbert
Director, Ralph Wilson Month, Harry Schmidt
28 March - 1 April April 4-4 Perseus @
A.N.U. Arts Centre

CANBERRA THEATRE 07-7608

Canberra Philharmonic Society

The Whole Horse Jan Combs, Don
Whitford Producers Bill Stephens, Clive
Arist, Brian Crisley as Conductor April 6-8 12
13

JOSAW COMPANY 07-07011

In reporting *Act Now* a documentary for
adults on self-government in the A.C.T.
Council and Co. a participatory play for
children, *The Days After* a participatory play
for preschool, Victorian lessons

TENTH THEATRE RESTAURANT 07-1414

Canberra Professional Group
Invincible Claret devised by Tula Taylor and
John Newman, Director, Ann Hutchins, Producers
and Secretary (continuing)

THEATRE 1307-6128

London Rep

Male Doll April 6-8 13 15 26 27 29

NEW SOUTH WALES

ACTORS COMPANY 060 1260

Sketch by William Shakespeare, Director
Matthew O'Sullivan, To 5 April

James and Juliet by William Shakespeare
Director, Steve Agnew, Designer, Matthew
Lorimer From 17 April

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES

01 660 11

The Twicken and All That Jazz by John

Dodrich, Caroline Colmer and John O'May
Director, John Dodrich, With Richard Hill,
Photobis Morrison, David Simpity NSW
country tour commencing 24 April

Heidi by 80's Book by Henry Lawson, Scoring,
Leonard Taub, South NSW country tour 3 April
to 20 April

Wayne Roland Brown, Mainstream School
West NSW and Spiny commencing
Rob Film and *Friends*
Nobinquin/Magpie/Suppert School, Iron
Spiny, South NSW and Riverina during April
Dark Horse and *Red Pepper* Workshop
Schools four Hunter Valley during April

AUSTRALIAN BALLET

See Sydney Opera House

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE FOR YOUNG
PEOPLE 069-6128

Amused by Richard Tallich, Director, Don
Davis - for urban schools

The Pantomime Captives by Richard Tallich
Director, Jane Whitlock

Running Shoes by Michael Carr, Director,
Raymond Orsini

The Story as Well as Details and Women and
Julia Director, Raymond Orsini, North West
Area tour 78

ENSEMBLE THEATRE 012 8177

Monks by Jack Haines, Director, Brian
Young, During April

GENESIAN 027 8028

Wandered Monks by George Bernard Shaw
Director, Kevin Jackson, To 4 May

HER MAJESTY'S 012 5411

Sketch by William Shakespeare, Lichfield
Festival Theatre Productions, Director, Peter
Dow, His 15 April, May 29 April

The Applicant by George Bernard Shaw
Chichester Festival Theatre Productions
Director, Patrick Garland, With Keith Mitchell
Myer, Down Park and Ray Deane, 17 to 22
April 1 to 6 May

MARIAN STREET 066 3164

Play or Love was devised by Liddy Morris
Director, Alison Duncan, From 5 April
James's End by E.C. Morris, Director,
Alison Duncan, From 14 April

MARQUETTE THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA
1287 8538

At the Wanderland written and directed by
Richard Bradshaw, Sydney Western suburbs
Has 7 April

MUSIC HALL THEATRE RESTAURANT

069-6128

Chained by Deane, written and directed by

Michael Robby, Continuing

MUSIC LOFT THEATRE RESTAURANT
077 61616

Deane written and performed by Peter
Morrison, with the Toppens family
Continuing

NEW ARTS THEATRE GLEBE 060 3022

And by Harvey, (Hoff) Performed by the
London Theatre Company, From 3 April

NEW THEATRE 079 3416

Set of by Edward Bond, Director, Ken Bowser
Director, Igon Nagy

NIMROD 069 3064

Upstairs *Curse of the Starving Class* by Sam
Shepard, Director, Ann Horley, Designer,
Marian Sharp, With Hugh Evans, Bruce, Clive,
Stewart, Malcolm, Keith, Sissy, Raymont,
George, Stewart, Benjamin, Franklin, Ray,
Anderson, To 16 April

Comedy of Errors by William Shakespeare
Director, John Ball, To 23 April

NO. 16 THEATRE RESTAURANT,

5 Lonsdale 079 8513

At Capone (Hoff), Party by Pat Garvey
Director, (Hoff), Pat Garvey, Choreography,
Keith Leslie, Set, Doug Anderson, Costumes,
Ray Wilson, Continuing

OLD TOTE 060 6123

Daughters Theatre Opera House, *Miss Julie* by
August Strindberg, and *Black Comedy* by Peter
Shaffer, Director, Ted Craig, With Robyn
Nelson, Terrie, Karl and John Parr, To 11 April
The Miser by Moliere, Director, Ted
Craig, With Kate Fagan, Barry, Don,
Russell, Kettel, Terrie, Karl and Raymond
Dugan, From 26 April

Paradise Theatre, *Jon Deane* Director, by
Alan Ayckbourn, Director, Peter Collingwood,
With Peter Whistler, Jane Brown, Jenny
McNair, Alan Deane and Peter Thady, 5 April
to 23 April

On by Hugh Leonard, Director, Peter
Collingwood, With Tom Fardy, Maggie
Kirkpatrick, Alan Tobin and Clare Crowther,
From 11 April

Paradise Theatre, *Jon Deane* Director, by
Alan Ayckbourn, Director, Peter Collingwood,
With Peter Whistler, Jane Brown, Jenny
McNair, Alan Deane and Peter Thady, 5 April
to 23 April

On by Hugh Leonard, Director, Peter
Collingwood, With Tom Fardy, Maggie
Kirkpatrick, Alan Tobin and Clare Crowther,
From 11 April

OSCARS HOLLYWOOD PALACE
THEATRE RESTAURANT Sans Soap

1529 4423

Paradise Four Set, Set by Don Barry and Peter
Parr, Director, Jon Wong, Continuing

Q THEATRE, Power 0847 21 3713

A Day in the Death of Joe Egg by Peter Nichols
Director, Richard Brooks, March to 3 April
Shakespeare 5 April to 8 April, Perseus 12
April to 18 April

Almond Person Singular by Alan Ayckbourn
Director: Darren Workentin From 28 April

RIVERINA BLACKING COMPANY
468 25 3021

Waters of 51 Music and Lyrics by Les Mailes
and Terry O'Connell 12 April to 21 April
Diamond Study by Blind Simpson and Jim
Mann Watts 29 April to 14 May, Touring 13
to 21 May

SEYMOUR CENTRE 420-8155

*York Theatre: The Casbah Album Trilogy: A
Hard God, Forever Love, An Eager Hope* by
Peter Kierka Director John Tisdall With
Vagge Kerpstock, Alan Wilson, Philip Ross,
Ray Mangan, Isaac From Tony Shelton.
Harris Lewis Vic Kasey
Events: Theatre *The Good Adventure* by
Phyllis Coleman. Marcellite musical show.
Schools close 4 April to 17 April
Directors: *The Run Run Club* by Theatre
Workshop. Curlew Theatre. Director Rex
Crompton Designer Russell Emerson

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE (02) 9549

Opera Theatre Australian Ballet, two
programmes *Symphies in 3 The Queen
Cassius Marston and Juliet* Throughout April
Exhibition: *Red* Designer: Association
Brahman Throughout April

THEATRE ROYAL (01) 4111

My Fair Princess by Charles Lawrence With
Paula Wilson and Neil Farley To 5 April
Prayer New South Wales Dance Company
choreographed by Gaele Murphy 10 April to
12 April
Love Durs Nightclub Television cast From 24
April

WHITE HORSE HOTEL, Newcastle (01) 302
The R.S.L. Show by Foreman Kirby and Peter
Stephens Director Ian Tisdall Designer, Peter
Pinder To 21 April

QUEENSLAND

ARTS THEATRE (01) 2166

Alary Street by Frederick Schiller Director, Bill
Hill With Josephine Debonchus Jennifer
Bastmore Kevin Radwin and Ian Thomson
To 15 April
The Bury of the Tomatoes by Jane Aronoff
Director, The Mommies Designer, Max Hurley
26 April 20 May
The Wrath My Friend and the Giant Civil by
Rugene Hickey Director, Barbara Webber
Childrens Theatre each Saturday

HER MAJESTY'S (01) 2717

Othello by William Shakespeare. Chichester
Festival Theatre Company production
Director Peter Davis Designer, Finley James
28 March 1 April
The Applicant by George Bernard Shaw
Director, Patrick Garland Designer, Susan
De Catherines Raymond Hughes 3 April 8
April
Queensland Opera Company *The Cenci* Brian

by Johann Strauss Director, John Thompson
Conductor Graeme Young Designer, Peter
Cooke With Catherine Dayal and Peter Lane
18 April 29 April

LA BOTTE (06) 6525

The Band by Noel Wilson Director Designer,
David Bell With Corp. Silverman, Marina
Bacon Larne Bell and Stewart Scott To 8
April
Young Alf by Steve Spens Director, Rick
Bilfinger Designer, David Bell With Rod
Winstler, Kay Stevenson, Kay Perry and Sean
Mee Opens 14 April

QLD ENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY
21 5171

Don't Paddle Against the Wind, Ashle by
Kenneth Ross Director Bryan Mason
Designer, Fanni Reddy 3 April 21 April

TWELFTH NIGHT (02) 5589

Not operating during April

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN DANCE THEATRE

212 2848
Workshop April 11

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN THEATRE
COMPANY (01) 5311**

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams
Directed by Ron Ross, designed by Richard
Roberts April 28

THE STAGE COMPANY

Shardun Theater
The Right Man by Kay Ross, Directed by John
Duck April 8-25

STATS OPERA (01) 5162

Opera Theatre
Misriage of Figue Opens May 3

TASMANIA

THEATRE ROYAL (04) 2166

The Glass Menagerie devised and written by Gary
Down and Ron Parkinson Directed and staged
by John Pailington 6 April 15 April
*Shardun Theatre Royal Light Opera
Company* 20 April to 6 May

TASMANIAN PUPPET THEATRE

Indigenous tour sponsored by Department of
Foreign Affairs 30 March to 12 April
Magic Shadow Show Tasmanian schools tour
13 April to 30 April

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CLYDE THEATRE RESTAURANT (01) 1591
Laughing Unlimited Revue (Director, Ross
Smith)

HOLE IN THE WALL (01) 2409

The Seagull by Anton Chekov Director, Mike
Munn 17 March 22 April



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(03) 746 6436**

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Q Theatre

**A DAY IN THE DEATH OF JOE BIRD
by PETER NICHOLS**

March 18 April 2 — Perth
April 5 9 — Blacktown Town Hall
April 12 16 — Manly Cinema
Perthshire

**ASSAID PERSON SINGULAR
by ALAN AYCKBOURN**

April 28 May 14 — Perth
May 17 21 — Blacktown Town Hall
May 24 28 — Manly Cinema
Perthshire

THE Q THEATRE

P.O. BOX 101, PERTH 6001 Tel: 08 120 6120

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Maurice Elkin and Rod Damber
in

THE SOUTH PLAT (A new line) SHOW
Directed by Lyle Adams — Directed by Lyle Adams

Tuesday (in-Bed) 8.15 p.m.
Dinner from 6.30 p.m. — Sunday at 4.30 p.m.
Commencing April 14th at 8.15 p.m.
"JOURNALS" and "SUNDAY" by C. (Sunday)

LICENSED POWER AND RESTAURANT CARD

Opening Tuesday March 27th at 8.15 p.m.

VANTRES

by Jacky Simpson

(08) 921 1111 (08) 921 1111

Rehearsal for Best Play of the Year

by C. (Sunday)

Friday 28-29 p.m.

Dinner from 6.30 p.m. and 8.00 p.m.

Rehearsal for Best Play of the Year

by C. (Sunday)

by C. (Sunday)

by C. (Sunday)

by C. (Sunday)

by C. (Sunday)

by C. (Sunday)

by C. (Sunday)

NATIONAL THEATRE (01 2550)

Playhouse

Dear Fish Sea and IY by Pam Goss
Melbourne Theatre Company production 30
March-12 April

The Club by David Williamson. Melbourne
Theatre Company production 17 April-30
May

Greenroom

Goats by Barry Korda. Director: Andrew Ross.
4 April-21 April

REGAL THEATRE (03 127)

No Sex Please. We're Break by Marnoss and
Foss. 28 March and continuing

W. A. I. T. HAYMAN THEATRE (030 1030)

Hiding Town by Stephen Polaski. Director:
Stephen Barry. 3 April-12 April

VICTORIA

AUSTRALIAN DANCE THEATRE

National Theatre

New Work First programme April 6-12
Second programme April 13-19

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING GROUP

(041 7153)

Prism Factory

Back to Back Street. A group developed show.
March 21-April 19

The Radio Show. Radio Show Company. April
24-May 7

COMEDY THEATRE (051 3311)

For Coloured Girls. Adelaide Festival
Production. March 28 on

HER MAJESTY'S (041 1111)

Chorus Line. Expected to continue through
April

HOOPLA THEATRE FOUNDATION

(03 4161)

Playbox Theatre

Project Strangers and The Christian Brothers by
Ross Blair. Two plays co-produced by Moorool
and Hoopla

LAMAMA (03 499)

Singap. Play written and directed by Sam Rung.
Thurs. Sat. April 7-10

LAST LAUGH THEATRE RESTAURANT

(03 8220)

Four Seasons. Daily. Backstage with Poshes
La Creme and Henry Man. Through April

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY

(059 9123)

Admission

Richard The Third by William Shakespeare
Directed by Nick Sadler. March 16-April 29

The House Strategem by George Farquhar
Directed by Frank Hauer. May 4-June 10

Russell Street

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